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SLIGHT REMINISCENCES

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"MEN SHOULD MAKE DIARIES," SAID A WISE COUNSELLOR,
AND WOMEN FANCY THAT THEY SHOULD DO THE SAME.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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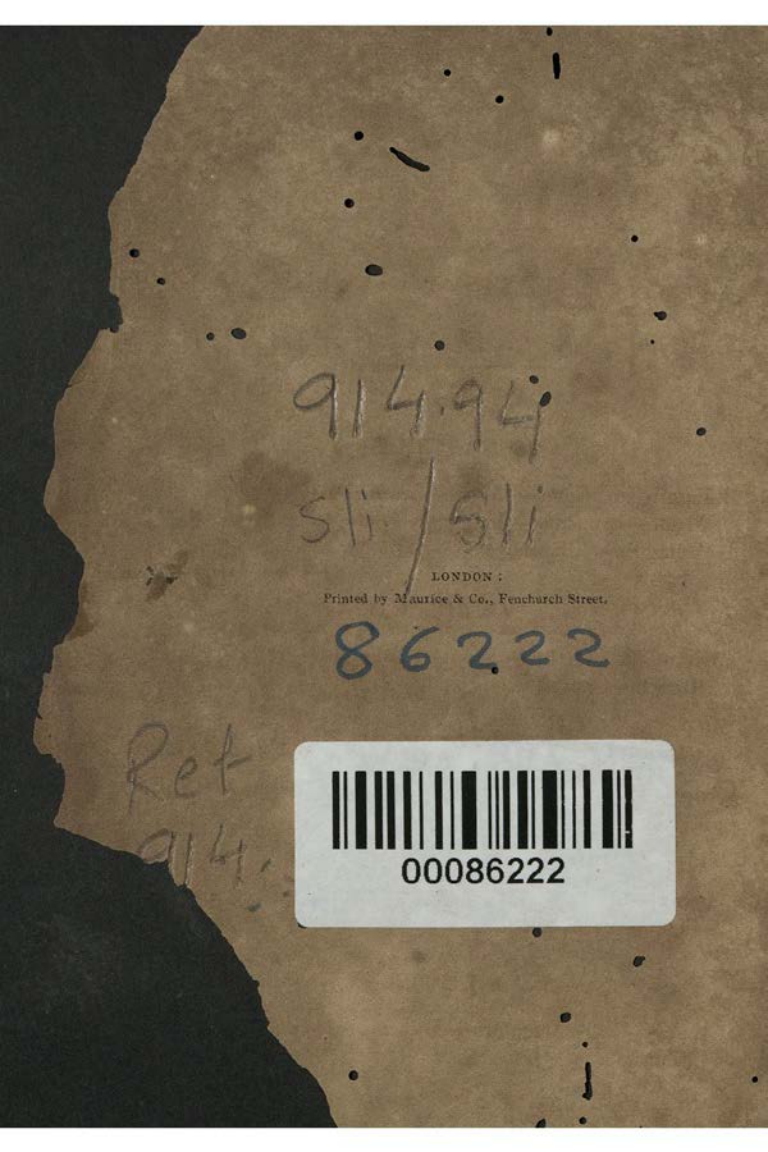
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CONTENTS TO VOL. II.

CHAPTER I.

Belaggio to Como—Como—Varese—Madonna del Monte—Amazons—Beggars—Opera—Return to Belaggio—Villa Belvedere—Milan . . . . *Page* 1

CHAPTER II.

Milan—La Certosa—Pavia—Voghera—Novi—Route to Genoa 30

CHAPTER III.

Approach to Genoa—Genoa—Coup-d'œil—Details . 51

CHAPTER IV.

Genoa—Return to Milan—Sesto-Calende—Ferry at Sesto—To Arona 79

CHAPTER V.

Arona—Lago Maggiore—Baveno—Isola Bella—Isola Madre—Orta 100

CHAPTER VI.

Duomo D'Ossola—The Simplon—Brieg—Canton du Valais—Sion—Martigny—Bex—Vevay . . . 114

CHAPTER VII.

Lausanne—Orbe—The Jura—Besançon—Montbar Route to Paris—Approach to Paris 135

SUPPLEMENT.

CHAPTER I.

Disturbances at Paris in 1830—First Act of a Revolution—The Barrière passed—Fearful Intelligence—Joigny—Route changed—Tonnerre—The Dauphiness—Dijon—Auxonne—New Fears and Dangers—Dôle—A still Night—Salins—The Frontier passed—Switzerland—Couvet—To Neufchatel—Good News—To Berne 157

CHAPTER II.

Unterseen—Improvements—Lodging-houses—Shepherdesses—Boningen—The Jungfrau—Advantages of Travel—Evening in an Oberland Village—Chalet of the Handeck—The Grimsel—Glaciers of the Rhone—A pastoral Breakfast—The Furca—Chalets and Shepherds—Hospital—Andermatt—Valley of Urseren—New Devil's Bridge—Wasen—The Inn—Scenery of the Forest Cantons—Atmosphere and Artists 181

CHAPTER III.

Valley of the Haute Reuss—To Fluelen—Women of Bouschs—The Baron's Daughters—Stantz—The Cross-bow—Churches—Lake of Sarnen—Third Thoughts—Contrasts—Oberland Inns—Berne—St. Urbain—Fast Day—Monastic Hospitality—Approach to Lucerne—Night and Day in a Swiss Town—Nunneries and Nuns—Lucerne from the Lake—Italian Opera at Lucerne 207

CHAPTER IV.

Ascent of the Righi—Snow Mountains—Receipt to make Tea—A Nursery Tale—The Calling-up—Sun-rise—Our Lady of the Snow—The Righi—Descent by Weggis—Mountain Superstitions—Dominick of the Cave—Pastoral Character of Switzerland—Again at Lucerne—View from my Window—Fête Days—Clerical Gaieties—Christian Tolerance 232

CHAPTER V.

The Frozen Lake—A rough Sketch—Change of Aspect—Hamlet at Lucerne—Lucerne Politics and Opinions—A Country Wedding—Clara Wendal—Climate of Lucerne—Winter Amusements—Market-day—Family Portraits—The Country People—Intended Departure—For and Against—Consolations—Increase of Gaiety. 259

CHAPTER VI.

New Year's Day—Scriptural Beauty and Simplicity—Christmas Carols—Auld Lang Syne—The Todenhaus—The early Grave—My first Day of Freedom—The Pilate—The Bay of Winkel—Sledges—News from Basle—Balls—Views—Traineaus—Cordeliers—Indulgence—The Solitary Tree—Holidays—Mothers—Snow—Agrémens of Lucerne—Quarterly Fair—Crime and Punishment—The Executioner's Garden 281

CHAPTER VII.

Regrets—Masks—The Freutchi—National Music—Country Balls—On Dits—Life at Lucerne—Farewell Thoughts—Departure from Lucerne—Zolfingen—Arbourg—Evil of a bad Name—Approach to Basle—Basle—Return to France—Conclusion 308

SLIGHT REMINISCENCES.

CHAPTER I.

BELAGGIO TO COMO—COMO—VARESE—MADONNA DEL MONTE—AMAZONS—BEGGARS—OPERA—RETURN TO BELAGGIO—VILLA BELVEDERE——MILAN.

UNQUESTIONABLY the Italians are the noisiest people in Europe,—singing like angels, and talking (as far as voice is concerned), like traffickers in fish or charcoal, the ear knows not whether it seizes the notes of a prima donna, or of a macaroni vender. Last night, a party from Milan (capital gentry, our hostess said), who were either convivial or quarrelsome till an unreasonably late hour, put sleep quite out of the question,—such shouting,—such screaming,—a dozen voices raised together, and sustained with incredible power of lungs,—

each striving to maintain the upper key, but a sharp female treble always *lady* of the ascendant. And then the hostess, with soft, sweet eyes, and a delicate outline, raving like an infuriated bacchante, and even the little girl of the bodkins throwing in a note. It is extraordinary that a people whose song is all passionate tenderness,—all soul,—all sweetness,—should have frequently the speaking voices of porters and oyster-women. Yet they are a kind, good tempered people,—not rough, I think, in any thing but their voices. I have seen instances of inflexible mildness in Italy, that were really edifying.

Came down to Como this morning, by the Lario steam-packet. One of the disadvantages of a steam-boat is, the want of a word to express its movement. It is neither rowing, nor sailing, nor gliding; it is *trembling;* but this is an unmanageable word, nothing can be made of it; so we *passed* the mountains in their rich autumnal suit of Spanish chestnuts, the melancholy Pliniana, the scattered villages,—all picture without and all wretchedness within, hung upon arches smothered in vines, and flaunting in the golden blossoms of the broad-leaved gourd,—Nesso with its deep wooded gully, and the wild cascade dashing through it,—and the promontory of Torno,

the delicious promontory, with all its southern accompaniments, its fine group of pyramidal cypress, and one lone pine,—that beautiful tree, which, beyond all others, becomes and identifies the landscape of Italy.

Como must be very much embellished within the last four years, or I must have done it injustice. I had it in my memory as a very dirty fishy little place, but to-day it has rather a decent air; it is true that I have only seen the best part of it. The cathedral, encrusted with marbles rudely but richly sculptured, has, in its spacious interior, a fair proportion of the massive ornaments with which religious edifices in this country are always enriched—or encumbered—and a fine touch of the dim gloom, which becomes religious edifices every where. It was twilight when we entered it yesterday evening, but midnight in its dark aisles; we could only see its vastness, its heavy columns, and the shining, almost glittering white, of some statues that ornament a showy altar, before which two lamps were burning. There are pictures here by Luini, but all in darkness; and the Plinys have each a niche in the principal front, where they take their places amongst saints and martyrs.

Just returned from a joyous pilgrimage to the

Madonna del Monte. Passing by Varese and its pretty vicinity, full of villas, Italian in character but English in neatness, we halted at an inn appropriately called the Mount of Olives, at the foot of the holy hill. Hunted all the way by ten guides, with six or eight horses, all hoping to benefit by our laziness or inexperience. But I alone played the dupe, and was prevailed upon to let myself be carried up in a sort of sedan chair. I believe I complied to get rid of their importunate clamour, for their assistance was by no means necessary; the ascent, though long, is gradual, and the *staxioni* (fourteen, I think, in number) form so many resting-places, that it calls for very little exertion.

These *staxioni* are curious things in their way. Each chapel contains a certain number of figures, larger (generally) than life, modelled in terra cotta, and illustrative of some remarkable event in the history of Our Saviour, as recorded by the Evangelists. The first represents the Annunciation; the scene, the interior of a cottage simply furnished with implements of female industry scattered about, and a praying-desk from which the Virgin appears to have just risen in astonishment at the sight of the angelic visitor who stands before her. The Salutation follows, and then the Presentation in

the Temple, and Christ confounding the sophisms of the Doctors, one of whom looks through a modern eye-glass. There is sometimes a good effect of expression and grouping. In the last awful scene, boys play at draughts, unmindful of the great tragedy acted in the back-ground, and now and then an enormous goître doubles the head of a centurion, a pious allowance of the good things of this country extended to Palestine.

A look over five lakes, taking in part of the Lago Maggiore and its mountains, with a rich wooded stretch of less elevated but charming character, pays the trouble of the ascent better, perhaps, than the *stazioni*. Some students who were running up before us, as if they had left their dinner cooling, evidently thought so; but a high priest, to whom two off-shoots of holiness were obsequiously doing the honours of their mountain, looked unction, as he stood with an air at once sanctified and aristocratical within the grating, through which we sinners peeped.

Rebelled against a dirty table-cloth at the locanda on the top of the holy hill. One must not strain at gnats in Italy, but this was swallowing a camel; so we had a clean one—rough dried, and after breakfasting, finished our pilgrimage at the holy shrine. A priest, who showed the way, lighted

four wax tapers before the glass case, which contained the Lady of the Mountain herself; then devoutly withdrawing the curtain, exposed the miraculous image to our view in a periwig and gilt crown, and a petticoat of white brocade strained over a court hoop. A sight obviously edifying to the devout souls who were kneeling round us, praying and supplicating, and making the most of the chance thrown in their way, for of course they only see such padlocked rareeshows when strangers pay for it. In another chapel, the bodies of two blessed women, but not saints (as the priests informed us), are what is called *preserved.* They were nuns in the adjoining convent—this *were* sounds like yesterday; but one had been dead four hundred and forty-eight years, the other three hundred and fifty; little of the human form remained,—if human that could be called which more resembled a monkey, dried and blackened by the Egyptian secret. It was an unpleasant and humiliating sight; but here again the crowd seemed deeply penetrated.

Thirty-two nuns are now buried alive within the convent, into which no foot, save that of their spiritual director, ever intrudes. Poor things!—some one has said, there is no present, nothing but the past and the future; but for some there

is no future. To these poor nuns the *to be* of this world, is as nothing. I hope they are old and ugly, and love snuff, and have never inhaled any other incense than that burned in their chapel.

What an idling vocation is that of shrine-hunting! No festa to-day, and yet we have met, I should think, a hundred people, journeying up the mount to entitle themselves to the plenary indulgences promised on every chapel door to those who visit the sanctuary, sincerely disposed to pray for the extirpation of heresy, and the glory of the mother church.

I do not exactly know what the noisy folks whom we encountered on our descent were going up to pray for, but they certainly did not look as if they carried their scruples heavily. The foremost pilgrim was a female of a certain age, with a face "round as the shield of my fathers," flesh tints a little Bardolph'd, and a twinkling eye. A gentlewoman, as far as dress may be presumed to indicate gentility—but riding astride in a scanty muslin petticoat! such a dreadful exhibition! But she herself was convulsed with laughter, and so was a young girl who followed mounted in the same disgusting way, but who had some traces of delicacy in her countenance that contrasted pitiably with her most unfeminine position. Their beaus followed

on foot, indulging in most unseemly mirth, which found its echo in the loud shouts of their coarse companions. That sweet picture of

> "A maiden never bold
> Of spirit, so still and quiet that her motion
> Blushed at itself,"

crossed my mind, and made me think of what woman might be, and what she sometimes is. Nothing could be more shocking to humanity, than the loathsome objects posted by the road-side on our return, protruding their amputated or withered limbs into our very eyes. Some with scarcely a vestige of the human face, spread out on the ground imploring charity, with all the emphatic violence of Italian gesticulation; others moaning piteously. One poor wretch craved alms for the dead, and looked as if he himself was numbered with them. And all these sorry sights in such a lovely and abundant land! But it is a land abounding in violent contrasts, distressing ones sometimes.

I asked leave to count the bodkins in a beautifully arranged head, belonging to one of the fair inmates of the Mount of Olives; there were forty-two small ones with ladle-shaped heads, and two as large as an ordinary stage dagger, quite enough

to do Duncan's business, or Agamemnon's either. The rabble, who had forced their services upon us, as guides, bearers, &c., were not the less knaves for dwelling in the shadow of the holy hill; they wanted to double their original agreement, wheedled, raved, and finally outwitted us. We were glad to run away from this beatific neighbourhood, laden with rosaries and hearts of silver filigree. The students bought hearts too (bleeding ones), and bambinos made of a kind of paste that were hawked about at the doors of the chapel; I thought they ate them, but as a monk who was looking on said nothing, I suppose I was mistaken. Perhaps he was the baker's sleeping partner.

There are more pretty, liveable country houses about Varese, than are usually found in the vicinity of a small Italian town. I think it would be a very agreeable place to encamp near, for a short time at least. It is a pleasant little town, in a fine and cheerful country, midway (or nearly) between two divine lakes, with a fine drive to each; that to Laveno, taking in the opening on the Lago Maggiore, delicious. It has not of course the resources or variety of Milan; but it has more country, and finer, and a closer neighbourhood to the great objects of attraction. Things seemed so snug and prosperous here, that I looked about,

hoping to see some habitable cottages; but they are wretched abodes, sashless and comfortless; the paper, meant to supply the place of glass, hanging about in tatters, no corner appropriated to domestic comfort, no chamber that seems to be set apart for rest. This might be bearable if the sun was always shining, and that one could sit in December under a spreading vine, or sleep in an orange bower; but it rains in the north of Italy just as it does elsewhere, and freezes too, when the sky is out of humour, and then these dismal holes are indeed deplorable. Yet the people here look gay, and the children are beautiful. The neat and careful system of husbandry practised in the north of Italy, and its well-dressed population, contrast singularly with the comfortless dwellings, and sloppish notions of domestic economy. The women here slip their bare feet into something between a sabot and a sandal, or to take a comparison nearer home than France or Athens, a sort of Bath clog, with showy straps fastened with bows of orange or yellow ribbons, in which they totter along as if their feet were not at home in them.

Arrived at Como in time for the opera,—quite a burst of splendour. Black velvet draperies frosted with bouquets of silver flowers, draperied

again with pink and silver, boxes like boudoirs, hung with rose-coloured satin, damasked with white, sofas, mirrors, splendid lighting-up, and all this gorgeous display at the opera-house of Como! We stood amazed, wondering how it all got there, and struck with the delicacy of taste with which so much tinsel was managed; nothing exuberant, no obtrusive glare, though perhaps better suited to a ball room than a theatre. Wherever effect, either sacred or profane, is to be produced, whether it be a benediction at Rome or a scenic decoration at Como, Italian taste is always perfect.

The performance was spiritless, not bad enough to laugh at, nor good enough to give pleasure. I forget the name of the piece, whether it was "les Fureurs de Scapin, ou les Fourberies d'Oreste;"* but the prima donna was a young Englishwoman, who seemed a favourite, and was much encouraged; it was her benefit, and we understood that the decorations had been hired for the occasion.

At six o'clock this morning we were on board the steam-packet on our return to Belaggio. A full freight,—chiefly people from Milan, civil and communicative. But we did not reckon upon

* Vide Piron.

hearing English literature discussed in an Italian passage-boat, and by Italians too. A gentleman of Milan and his son, who spoke English well and understood it thoroughly, surprised us by their acquaintance, not only with our most celebrated and popular works, but with many that are little read even in England. The elder gentleman discussed Sterne's claims to originality, talked of his plagiarisms from Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, went from thence to the now-forgotten controversy on Macpherson's pretensions, and on to the beauties and defects of our metaphysical poets. He admired, and understood Milton; had translated Cowley's Catalogue of Beauties, and Cowper's John Gilpin, into Italian verse; loved Dryden, had Walter Scott's Life of Swift in his pocket, and seemed as familiar with our great names as if he had passed all his life in England, where, however, he had never been. The elder gentleman was the Count Taverna; the younger, the Count Lorenzo, his son. We breakfasted together, and met afterwards in the Serbelloni gardens. A statue of the younger Pliny, recently placed there, bears the inscription "Hîc Tragedia;" thus peremptorily settling a long-disputed question. Count Lorenzo said that he had gone some time since with the Duc de Lodi to visit

a campagna near to Varrena (a village on the lake), which was conjectured to be the Comedia of Pliny; but in answer to their inquiries, the persons occupying the house showed them a pair of sheets, in which St. Carlo Borromeo had slept two hundred years before, and thus ended the investigation.

It was a delightful day this last one. We dined again in the dear old room, with the kind hearted Luigi Sada waiting on us, guessing our thoughts, and anticipating our wishes. This mirror of gardeners is one of the many things that we regret in quitting Belaggio; we shall long remember his fine intelligent countenance, his dark Italian eyes kindling into the strong expression of real feeling as he bade us farewell,—kissing our hands, with all the natural grace and kindly warmth of his country. Good Luigi!—we shall, I hope, all meet again under the shade of the vines, whose rich clusters promise a golden harvest. It would have been delightful to have witnessed the abundant vintage of beautiful Belaggio, and the festive gaiety of its bacchanalia. But it must not be; already the shadows of night draw round us, and shut out the solitudes where we have passed days never to be forgotten. This is not a spot to be left with an every-day feeling of regret; it is not

a common paradise of leaves and flowers, but a scene which deeply affects the imagination, and betters the heart. One cannot look from these airy terraces on the beautiful world around, and on that mysteriously sustained heaven which makes its roof, without feeling the spirit purified, and the soul lifted above those *mean aspirings*, which, while they seem to expand the mind, destroy the fine fibrous net-work that sheathes its delicate construction.

I always find the rhetoric of nature more heart-stirring than that of the schools, and I believe the love of nature is one of the affections which lingers longest in the heart. How strongly, as we advance in life, is the vanity of those things which we most prized in youth made manifest; what importance have we given to untried joys and distinctions, and even to the lightest trifles,—a little while, and the most solid amongst them seem like old toys not worth playing with. We find that feelings, opinions, modes, and even hearts change,—every thing but nature; she alone is immutable, and for that reason her spells are often the last broken. We confide in her promises, and know that she will never deceive us; every thing else may be false—hope, love, beauty, friendship, fame,—but nature never. If we sow

an acorn by the side of a grave, we are sure that an oak will overshadow it; if we return to the country of our birth, changed and forgotten, we find the same hills and streams, and even the same flowers—if man has not disturbed them—which we loved in childhood. Pæstum has still its roses, though its tombs have long been swallowed up in the general oblivion. These are the reasons why the love of nature has been known to ripen in the heart amidst the ashes of other, and once warmer, feelings. We love, and lean on things that we know will not break down, or forsake us. Of others—even those that flatter us most—we can too often spell the duration; but we are sure of nature, for she must outlive ourselves.

As we descended the hill, a little girl was coming up, with a flock of refractory sheep under her protection; they were somewhat in our path, —enough, I suppose, she thought, to impede us; for she seized L——'s arm with gentle violence, and kissed it as he passed, as if she would deprecate his anger by her sweet and humble action. But we were certainly never less disposed to indulge ungracious feelings than at that moment. Found at our return to the inn, a bouquet of such flowers as even Van-Huysem's fancy never revelled

in, gathered at the Villa Melzi, and left for us by our intelligent companions of the morning. It was quite a study, both as to colouring and arrangement. Rousseau, who once thought of teaching the art of tying up nosegays to the flower girls of Paris, would have sat down before it worshipping.

I know not how we should get away from this Larian lake,—it has such grappling irons,—but that we hope to see it again. Hope is assuredly the most soothing of nature's "lenitives;" were it not for intentions and anticipations, what would become of us here below!

We have had a scene this morning with our little waiter, the fair Dominica. When she perceived that all was ready for our departure, she came into the room where we were sitting and stood bolt upright before us, as if she intended to make a set speech, and had got as far as to say, that she had never seen any *forrestieri* whom she had loved as she loved us; when suddenly her voice became tremulous, and gathering herself up as if for a great effort, she made a sudden spring, and throwing her arms round Gertrude's neck, kissed her on each cheek repeatedly; then turning to Amy, and then to me, embraced us both tenderly, conjuring us, should she not be at the

inn when we next came to Belaggio, to send for her to her father's casa that she might come and wait upon us. And there she stood as we rowed off from shore, kissing her hand from an open casement, as long as our boat continued in sight. The low Italians of the towns are sometimes crafty and over-reaching, but the country people have a tinge of feeling about them, a glow of affectionate kindness, that speaks to the heart, and for it.

The Italian character has great breadth and raciness, and a fine natural colouring, never sullied by affectation; not but they are tricking too in their way, but their cunning goes straight forward to its aim, and is never wasted on points of display of vanity,—things which rarely enter into an Italian head. Fashion, whose laws are in England a kind of interior police, by which our most domestic concerns are regulated, has little influence here; the Italians, as Madame de Staël has observed with her usual skill in character, "ne font rien, parce qu'on les regarde, et ne s'abstiennent de rien, parce qu'on les regarde."

We had fixed on this morning to visit our old friend L——, at his delightful villa between Como and the promontory of Torno. He received us in a temple quite in keeping with the classical recollections of the Larian lake. And there we

sat, catching gleams of the broad water and the gliding sail, till it was time to beautify our travelling dresses with a relief of fresh muslin, previous to assembling at dinner. I wonder no lady traveller has ever penned a distich on the blessings of cuffs and collars, or apostrophized a lace-cap. What delicious bavardage that gifted gossip Madame de Sevigné would have thrown off, had she ever called in their aid to illuminate the sober pelisse of myrtle-green or quiet violet, or to give a superlative air to the very positive black robe, to which, as a travelling dress, our English ladies generally (and very rationally) give a decided preference.

All sorts of things which the eye loves are here. A house thrown back a little from the lake, just enough to make room for a perfumed terrace, fragrant with the rich odour of the lemon, the orange, and other sun-loving things. A terrace sweet in scent, and in sound too; the sound of waters breaking against its base, and interrupting, by their gentle murmur, a silence which would otherwise be absolute. Behind, a rich bank, abrupt and woody; and above, the gracefully indented outline of a double-forked mountain.

It is delightful to meet with short fresh sward, and walks traced through it under an Italian

sky ; walks looking over a bright spread of water, or on mountains in their shifting dress of light and shadow, with hamlets scattered over them half hid in the wild verdure of innumerable clinging plants, or lying all sparkling on some sunny point, with boats and nets, and all the implements of a fisherman's rude trade falling into the picture.

This delicious villa owes every thing but its situation to our friend's creative taste. The interior, elegant but unostentatious, has all the comfort of an English *home*, and is evidently the residence of a person of refined pursuits, who has carried with him into his retreat all the graceful courtesies of society.

Quitted the Villa Belvedere and our kind host this morning at an early hour. At six o'clock the lake was one watery blot ; looked across towards the Villa d'Este, but it was as gray as Hyde Park in October, when the wind comes from the east. The last time I saw it, it stood out blazing in a meridian sun in the midst of rock-work, and brick-work, and wood-work, enough to make the heart bleed. Red-hot roofs and white wash are the deadly sins of the lake of Como. Whilst I was peering through the haze, the steam-boat

ploughed by with a visage as black as the famed Dutch merchantman. This might pass for an October morning anywhere; but here it is November, compared with yesterday. How bleak the Pliniana must look, with its mouldy courts, roaring cataracts, and funereal pines. The very *gentlemanly* and philosophic Roman who delighted in that dreary nook, must have been a man of melancholy fancies; but fancy has not room enough there even to curvet a little, much less to run out as it might on a wild heath, to snuff up the fresh air, or warm itself in a sunbeam.

A pretty young woman came in while we were at breakfast, to "do us courtesies," with shining eyes, and red hands,—two Italian features often united in the same person. The stamina of beauty is amazingly strong in this country; it springs up like tongue grass, anywhere and every where, but particularly amongst the *people*, when they use fresh water and are not sun-dried into cinders. Italian faces of the fine kind are superbly put together. There is a rich glow in the warm flesh tints that makes our alabaster beauties look insipid sometimes. Not but complexions of transparent fairness are often seen on this side of

the Appennines: I remember a girl at Vicenza, who out-lilied and out-bloomed the fairest composition of red and white that ever put a tender heart in peril on a spring Sunday in Kensington Gardens, but it is not the prevailing hue. It is true that ordinary features make frightful faces here. The old women are sorceresses, and even while young, the "too expressive she" is apt to run into the terrific.

It was a recreation to be alone (as we were today) on the lake, without feeling ourselves obliged, —after having seen it in all its lovely details again and again,—to throw off fresh raptures, hint at Paul Jovius, discuss the courtly Pliny, (the elder is generally laid by for Naples), look sentimentally at the lime which he (never) planted, and abuse the wooden Saragossa of the Villa d'Este when one wished to be silent, and to cogitate with the clouds and the chestnut-trees, and indulge in the humming of one's own idle thoughts. If one chances to stumble upon a companion by whose observations the mind is enriched, or the eyes opened, it is drawing a high prize in the great lottery of casualties. But to talk because you must talk, and to listen because it is civil to listen, while nature runs away from you with her green lapful

of treasures which you may never see again, is a worse penance than a hair-cloth shirt, or a dinner of stewed prunes and ditch water.

Como—dirty and lifeless. Changed my mind again about it. These sort of towns depend entirely on sunshine. This

"Fruitful Lombardy,
The pleasant garden of great Italy,"

contrives to be very dull sometimes; the drive to Milan is supremely so. Eternal plains of maize, bordered with melancholy mulberries. Wild gusts of wind and rain did not improve the matter, but as we approached the town the sun looked out, and did the honours of the *entrée*, which is certainly striking; so is the fine street that terminates in the Porte Orientale, and the gay Piazza del Duomo, and the Duomo itself magnificent and magical, but (I say it fearfully) not venerable—I mean in its *exterior*; the interior brings the mind back to the rites of Christian worship, but the white and dazzling shell, and its white and dazzling statues, look more like something raised by the power of magic, than an edifice built up by man for pious purposes.

I like Milan for its clean and cheerful air, but

I should like it better if it was more positively Italian. It has strong character too, but not decided Italian character. Many things bear the heavy impress of the middle ages, but some of the finest have a modern air, as if the great N. was stamped upon them. For several, indeed, Milan is indebted to the mighty spirit who spread the wings of his glory almost paternally over Italy. He was in general no applier of the balm of Gilead. but let the wounds which he inflicted heal as they might ; but for the love he bore to Italy, he seemed to have thrown off his old character of whirlwind and thunder, and sincerely to have wished her condition bettered morally and politically, and by the best means too,—the eradication of old abuses, and an enlightened system of national education. He gave her liberal institutions, public schools, magnificent roads ; kept down the exorbitant and overwhelming power of the church, dispersed her predatory hordes, lighted up her cities, and converted them from the lurking holes of assassins into places of security. He won the hearts of the people of Italy, by remembering that it had a people, a thing which rulers, who (generally speaking) only come in contact with the high and mighty, are apt to forget. He devised amusement,

and created occupation for the lower classes, and called up the citizens, who were paled out from the circles of the nobility, to take their places amongst those from whom the accident of birth had previously removed them. They came with their talents and unfettered ardour, and their wives and daughters with their beauty and accomplishments. All the grateful vigour of newly appreciated intellect, and all the graceful influence of virtuous loveliness were thrown into the scale. The pictures and the statues were forgotten, or their loss remembered without rancour. The balance was heavy, and the old authorities kicked the beam. The state of moral degradation into which Italy had long been sunk, was fast yielding to the influence of political and mental improvement, and the higher cast of spirits—those who felt and thought—were beginning to see that such things as a country and a national character were yet upon the cards, and might be won by vigorous exertion. But now all retrogades under the bigot sway of Austria, and the passing stranger finds ample food for thought, while he says a *requiescat in pace* to the soul, gone to its long account. A soul not sufficiently magnanimous to give a conquered country its liberty and choice of government, but with enough of good

in its mixed nature to make an arbitrary sway regretted, as if it had been freedom. It had, at least, the shape and colouring, and in its stead has come substantial and inglorious evil. But the excess of evil often produces good; tyranny engenders freedom, impiety religion, perhaps despair strength: for while hope exists we are content to suffer; but if we outlive its extinction, the very strength of the disease produces the crisis which brings about recovery.

We had but one short morning for Milan, so we looked again at the marble lace-work and sculptured legions of the Duomo, and its fine dim interior, vast and solemn. I thought the coved roof had been dressed in a new sheathing, carved and inlaid in the antique way; but learned that it was only painted. It is now in progress, and will, when completed, be a most perfect optical delusion. Gave the rest of the morning to the Brera gallery. There are divine things in it; a Guido, a Raphael, a Veronese, an Albano, and above all, a Guercino! almost matchless. Never was such a living head as that of Hagar; the look of utter desolation, the tremulous contraction of the eyebrow, the quivering lip, the tear!—tears are a common engine which great masters use but sparingly,

but Hagar's tears fall upon the heart,—I never saw distress so beautiful. The cognoscenti say that it is not in Guercino's best manner,—but it is in his best feeling. I sat before it, I believe for an hour, and then left it with reluctance.

Whoever visits Milan should repose
An hour or two before the masterwork
Of Guercino! 'Tis the bondswoman,
On whom old father Abraham sets his hand
To turn her to the desert; and it hangs
In the great gallery, where others are
Of mighty name, but none of equal charm.
For this is rare perfection; 'tis a thing
Created in the heart, and passing all
The fair imaginings of fancy. Love
Is there, and grief—beautiful grief! and dread
Of evil,—but that more for her young child,
Than for her tender self. How her sad eyes
Ask grace of the stern Israelite; sweet eyes!
With only woman's love and tears in them.
No anger, no rebuke, nothing but woe,
And that so deep and desolate,—so true!
My gentle Hagar! I have many seen
Whose beauty shone like stars,—and thine is dim,
Poor stricken deer! and yet there is a charm
In thy intense distress, which the heart loves
Better than the bright eye's triumphant glance
Or the cheek's rapid flush, though joy be there,

Joy which can never come to thee again!
Fair eyes, and sunny smiles, and maiden grace,
Youth's bright embellishments, are soon effaced
Or thought of as light dreams which melt in air,
When the mind beams on them. But thou, Hagar!
Lost woman,—wretched mother,—ne'er
Shall thy sweet form pass from my memory!
And when Giorgone's gorgeous portraitures,
Raphael's pure virgin eyes, Titian's full bright
Venetian beauties, Guido's penitents
With looks of earthly love, are dwelt upon
With raptures well deserved, I then shall think
Of her who journeys with her scanty scrip
To Paran's desert.
Honour be to him
Whose heart conceived this perfect work,
And left it to be felt and lov'd by ours!

The Brera possesses in common with most of the galleries in Italy, many specimens of the strong conceptions and meagre execution of the old school of painting. It possesses also something much more rare, a Martyrdom that not only does not disgust, but really edifies; a St. Cecilia by Procacini, with all the anticipations of heaven in her dying eyes. A difficult subject, beautifully managed. Took a turn on the broad, airy—and this evening though not always—dull Corso, and looked

in at the arch of the Simplon, one of the still unfinished records of Napoleon's triumphs. It advances a little, though slowly. To commemorate one's own glory seems a puerile vanity, unworthy of a great mind; but his was composed, like the statue of Nebuchadnezzar, of a mixed mould. Gold was there, but clay was there also. It is now of little consequence (considering it as a record), whether it may or may not be completed, or whether, if finished, it should have a name commemorative of Napoleon's victories, or Austria's assumptions. The great road of the Simplon will remain. There he has out-Hannibal'd Hannibal; and no Leopold, or Francis, or Regnier, present or to come, can dispossess him of this proud and enduring memorial of power, magnificently and usefully applied.

I ask pardon of the Cenacolo, of the Arena, of San Celso, with its frescoes within and its Adam and Eve without. One risks a church surfeit in Italy; every spot in which a bell is rung, or a taper lighted, has its catalogue of pretensions thrust into your eyes, like the list of horses at a race course,—one runs away from them at last; but I could have looked at this church of San Celso again with pleasure, not for the sake of the

above-mentioned attractions, but for the pleasant memory of three or four young girls, with devout airs of the head and faces full of innocent piety, whom I once saw there. I beg pardon too of the Ambrosian library; of Petrarch, who, loving Virgil perhaps as well as he did Laura, wrote the record of her death within the leaves of the precious manuscript which it possesses; of Leonardo da Vinci, who has sketched and scratched there, worthily and unworthily, and of a thousand other things with which I have not leisure to renew acquaintance. We find in travelling that time is not eternity, nor minutes hours. The remark is neither new nor profound, but it is of every-day application.

CHAPTER II.

MILAN — LA CERTOSA — PAVIA — VOGHERA — NOVI — ROUTE TO GENOA.

THE day has been hot and sunny, and the women glide about veiled, and shading their faces with enormous fans; looking, if old, like Spanish duennas, and if young, like the soft maskers of a Venetian carnival. I do not like the dress of the fine ladies here; it is all but perfectly French, yet that *all but* makes such a difference! The Italian women, with their expressive eyes and fine hair, look always well in the picturesque mezzaro, but the toilette of a Paris coquette is as inimitable as her airs and graces; both suit the *jolie figure chiffonnée* of the one, and neither accord with the natural character or classical outline of Italian beauty. For whether a woman here looks like an Agrippina * or a Sybil, whether the expression be stern

* I do not mean the tender Agrippina of the ashes, but her awful daughter.

and strong, or glowing and romantic, it is always natural, though sometimes perhaps of a nature too unrefined for the etherealism of woman. There is no trick, no *manége* in the rich and varying expression of their countenances; their minds and hearts look out at their eyes, in the direction which intellect or feeling gives them. All this is charming: but coarse loud voices, and violent gestures, and bursts of unrestrained passion, are not so, neither are red hands,—a sign of drudgery with us, but here, if not a patrician feature, at least one not incompatible with both birth and educated beauty. Talking of Italian features,—these agents of expression seem here very frequently to mean nothing, and oddly enough, when they appear purposely shaped and arranged to serve as a glossary to the mind. The aquiline nose, long black flexible eyebrow; the clear eye of correspondent hue, the chin cut after Titian's best pattern, indented under-lip, olive complexion, and raven hair, are frequently found gathered together as if in positive conspiracy against expression. Some of the heaviest and most unmeaning faces I have ever seen, have all the outward and visible signs usually indicative of mind and feeling. But no internal fire, no lighting up, nothing but idle flesh and strong points marking emptiness.

I cannot admire the vast and gloomy Scala. The audience is but guessed at, and every thing but the stage looks undefined and dingy. The performance last night was indifferent as an ensemble, but La Blache is very fine, both as to power and feeling. Had I never heard of him, I should perhaps have thought him still finer; but I found that there were deductions to be made from the extravagance of injurious panegyric. With the exception of La Dardinella, the women were poor creatures, incompetent as singers, and what Italian women rarely are,—insipid. *She* would sing well in a smaller theatre, but having too much taste to scream, is scarcely heard in the immensity of the Scala.

The ballet, considered as one of the best, if not the very best, in Europe, is just now below mediocrity as to dancers. The plunging and twisting, this evening applauded to the skies, would at Paris be scarcely tolerated at Franconi's. It was a ballet d'action, interspersed with pirouettes; the story from Lord Byron's Corsair, with very beautiful scenery, and a Gulnare who had some feeling in her mute wretchedness. But La Palarina was absent. I was disappointed, I may almost say, agreeably. I wished to have seen her again, yet recollecting what she had once made me suffer,

was almost pleased to escape from the effect of her too powerful acting. It was long before I could shake off the recollection of her Gabrielle de Vergy. It haunted me like a crime; for many nights I fell asleep thinking of the death shudder, the upright spring, the livid light in the hollow eyes, when the cruel present is placed before her. I had read of broken hearts, and believed that such things had been; but this seemed the reality, the life spring suddenly snapped, just as quick intense agony might have done it. Yet still she has not the touching simplicity of Bigottini; she is more passionate, but perhaps less tender. There were little touches in Bigottini's acting* so full of truth and feeling, that even Palarina's energetic wretchedness is less deeply affecting.

There was nothing alarming to the most irritable nerves in this evening's entertainment. The mob of Mussulmans and pirates wasted their "ineffectual fires" in the course of strutting and ranting, usually prescribed to dealers in dumb show; so not being provided with Aristotle's cataplasm of boiling oil, and feeling our eyelids getting unmanageable, we left Gulnare and her romantic bucanier to their fate, and returned to our albergo.

* Such as blowing out the lights in Clari, after vainly trying to withdraw her eyes from her lover's portrait.

I must say again, that I do not like the darkness of the Italian theatres. To a stranger the people are the show, and this source of interest is entirely cut off. If the opera be so finely cast as to be altogether absorbing, then another strong excitement is supplied; but this is rarely the case, even in Italy. And if it was, I do not comprehend how a little more light let in upon the surrounding faces could weaken it. This more than twilight has its conveniences, no doubt, for those who turn their boxes into boudoirs, receive their visitors, play at tarocco, and make a niche at the opera serve all the purposes of a saloon, without the expense or fatigue of regular reception. But the passing stranger must ever regret an opportunity lost of studying national character (often prominently exhibited at theatrical representations), and of judging foreign beauty. Besides, the coup d'œil is sombre, and indisposes the mind for receiving brilliant impressions. There is surely quite enough of the *chez-soi* in the closed box of the Paris or London opera-house to satisfy the enemies of display, and all those who have seen the splendours of the Academie Royale must allow that to produce effect, and prodigious effect too, it is by no means necessary that one half of the theatre should be involved in darkness.

O for a sleep long and profound, from Milan to Pavia! Somebody said the country was rich and beautiful; I saw nothing, but a straight canal, bordered with trees whose very leaves croak, and swampy fields flat as a billiard-table; heavy boats laden with country merchandise passing on slowly, and now and then an unwieldy barge towed heavily along, with the passengers stretched out on the flat roof of the cabin, sunning themselves lazily. But neither prima donna, nor soubrette, neither cat nor parrot, nothing to recall the gay life touches of Goldoni, or the almost as dramatic reminiscences of poor Michael Kelly. There ought, I think, to be Alps or Appennines somewhere near us, but if they are ever visible, I suppose they get up late, and deny themselves till they have taken their night-caps off. At this moment, nothing can be duller than the whole affair; a hot thick vapour that obliterates distance, and a home scene, which might serve for the ground work of a Dutch pastoral. Altogether, I think, worse than the Pontine marshes, for *there* are the Volscian hills, the mountain fastnesses of her, under whose feet the corn bent not; and there still sits the old enchantress.

"Who knows not Circe,
The daughter of the Sun?"

It is true, this is a dream,—and the frogs are a reality; but I am no amateur of frogs, not even of their hind quarters, though fried with bread crumbs, or *sautées à la bechamelle.* Lizards I tolerate for the sake of a low sunny wall that I dearly loved, and used to bask upon formerly; legions of these nimble creatures were always on that wall. At my approach they used to glide away; but when I sung (no matter how unmusically), they would steal out again from their hiding holes, and listen as if Amphion himself was fiddling to them. They are here in shoals, thick as the blades of grass, and I amuse myself as we roll along, in admiring the tremulous movement of their fine drawn bodies, and the rich cameleon hue of their coats, shifting through every possible variety of green.

Whole pages,—or a word,—are given to the Certosa, as those who view it happen to feel. For myself, I am no admirer of the kind of thing. Yet it is a rare casket of jewels, though idly squandered, and producing a frittered and inadequate effect. Every chapel is a cabinet, rich in onyx, amethyst, jaspar, lapis lazuli, and a thousand other precious things, paved with rare marbles, and supported by columns of oriental alabaster or some other equally costly material; in short, there is no end to the display: altars inlaid with the finest

Florentine pietra dura, or encrusted with sculpture, often beautifully executed; countless gates of brass, and candelabra fashioned after Greek models; the tomb of the first Visconti lavishly and delicately sculptured, the least malleable materials wrought into the lightest filigree; shrines set with corals and cornelians, and alas! angels decorated with necklaces and bracelets of the same. The sacred gloom, the lofty simplicity, which so well become a religious edifice, are utterly lost in the glitter of boudoir ornament, or the meagreness of band-box compartments. No breadth,—no dignity. And then the waste of wealth,—atrocious in the midst of perishing humanity. There is always enough of living wretchedness hanging about these heaps of stagnant riches, to form a contrast repugnant to good feeling.

A convent of Carthusian monks once flourished in this paradise of precious stones; but the Emperor Joseph put his imperial extinguisher upon them, and the brothers of St. Bruno returned to the desert, or the world,—I forget which. The exterior of the church is carved and chiselled like a Chinese toy, and the cloisters loaded with angels, and fruit, and flowers in terra cotta. They are quiet and monastic, and look as if learned and pious men might have mused and prayed within them.

I would honour religion even in the structure of her temples; I would have them vast and solemn, of noble architecture, and venerable dimness. But these gorgeous gewgaws neither influence the mind nor touch the heart; they do not even affect the imagination. It is a mere unmeaning waste of wealth, which, if wisely diffused, might make many a sad heart glad, and idle man useful.

The learned Pavia has nothing very taking in it. A long narrow street, with tall houses and little shops, terminating in a covered bridge of great length over the Ticino, is all that I know about it. We arrived late,—an hour after our appetites had told us it was dinner-time; and, having to choose between the urgency of hunger and the University, failed in our intellectual allegiance, and stuck, with a tenacity that I fear had nothing of mind in it, to our truffled turkey.

Turned out in the evening for the puppet-show (not always the worst show in Italy), not so much tempted by the reputation of the marionettes, though pronounced by our host as clever as those of Milan, and more cannot be said for wood and wire, as to perform a promise, of which, (knowing the effect of a word given and broken on the mind of a child), I was anxious to acquit myself. We got unimpeded through the principal street, look-

ing up at the balconies and thinking of the gentle Capulet, as one is apt to do at sight of balconies in Italy. But when, on turning into the lateral alleys, we found ourselves involved in their dirty labyrinths, while night was shutting in suddenly with scarcely the prelude of a twilight shadow, and saw two or three slouching figures standing in the opening of a dim arcade, through which we must of necessity have passed, we took fright, and scudded out again, as if we had seen the stiletto, hilt, blade and all, flourished under our very noses.

Sept. 29th.—A fog, which might make a cockney tremble for the city's ascendancy, and leaves nothing visible at either side of the road, but a few feet of marshy ground decorated with willows. I have some notion that one might die by the visitation of fog in Italy, just as one does in England. Crossed the Po over a bridge of boats, —all mud and mist. Tried to call up a few classical associations. Thought of Phaeton and his affectionate sisters (poor loving nymphs, they still stand weeping, as if their headstrong brother had been upset only yesterday); said to myself, again I behold the Po, the river of the gods and poets, whose trees weep amber, &c. But it would not do; the fog, the mud, and the *doganieri* were in full possession, and Ovid himself, had he been

with us, would have done as we did,—looked out of the carriage window, abused the skies, folded himself up in his toga, and sunk back into a well-stuffed corner.

Breakfasted at Voghera, a decent little town, where a young priest seemed chief Adonis; and the peasants carry their poultry and fruit in baskets of a graceful shape, hung on each end of a long pole, which, thus loaded, is suspended across the shoulder; the effect is picturesque, and turns the clowns of Voghera into the classical rustics of Claude or Poussin.

This young priest is very amusing; there is something so naïf and conscious in his beauism. He salutes the women as they pass with a gracious smile, seasoned with a little touch of protection, but no Tartufferie; I dare say he writes madrigals, and with opportunity, and a friendly Pompadour, might make in some thirty years hence a very decent cardinal—à la de Bernis. Adieu, flower of priesthood! and thanks for the five minutes' amusement your innocent antics have afforded me.

Soon after Voghera, the hills unveiled themselves, and we learned that such things were in our vicinity. For many miles the country has been one continued vineyard, unenclosed, and

very monotonous. Waggons laden with grapes and drawn by oxen file slowly along the road, sometimes accompanied by the proprietor on foot, escorting the produce of his vineyard; at others, followed by two or three lean olive-coloured women, with cotton shawls thrown (not unbecomingly) over their heads, or a swarm of sallow children, clinging to the slow rolling wheels. But no song, no dance, no festivity, and not a touch of sentiment. The graceful hilarity and joyous heedlessness of a southern vintage is made over to the opera; it is legitimate stage property, and exclusive too, as far as I have seen. The real vintage is mere field-work even in Italy, and very dirty work sometimes. The waggon and the oxen have, it is true, a classical air; and the rich abundance with which nature has here flung about the clustering fruit, with us a rarity, a pleasant one. But dirt spoils all, and to preserve our early poetical fancies in their freshness, we should neither dwell upon the process, or the persons who perform it;—"l'aimable et touchant tableau d'une allégresse générale," the delicious Saturnalias of Clarens, are the ecstasies of Rousseau's imagination, and as near to the reality as his fanciful notions of savage life are to the hut and blubber of the Esquimaux.

Passing through a village or little town, the name of which I have forgotten, a huge and rather ill-favoured Madonna, spread out upon the wall of a house, attracted our attention, not from its beauty, but its pretensions. The documents were, I suppose, in the strong box of the family; but the authenticity of the portrait was placed beyond dispute, by the words "Vero Ritratto" traced in large letters on a showy ground immediately under it.

A reverend father convoying home the fruits of his vineyard passes on foot, and bows to us courteously, while a friendly smile lights up his countenance. It is a thin kind face, that looks as if its owner would use the good gifts of fortune sparingly himself, and share them freely with others; the "bon curé" of Marmontel (a character to which the heart always warms) transferred to Italy, where the heavy stall-fed face, or the lank despotic one, is generally found swelling out or scowling from under the shade of the small three cornered hat,—self indulgence, or tyranny, or both, written in every line and wrinkle. Whenever I see a countenance full of benevolent and cheerful feeling in this class of the clergy abroad, I always wish its owner had the home blessings which an affectionate family can alone diffuse,—a wife or

daughter smiling on his return, or a son sharing his labours, and promising to perpetuate his virtues,—or at least that the singleness should be voluntary. It may be said that a parish priest has always an ample field for benevolent exertion. This is true, and he who tills and nourishes it in the spirit of truth and love, is indeed a benediction to his people; but it is hard to have one's path chalked out by others in such near in-door concerns, particularly when the thing is irrevocable.

Approaching Novi, the country awakens from its long dull sleep, and shows itself under a more agreeable aspect. The distant Appennines are soft and varied, with a warm aerial colouring, and a fine calm light upon them. Novi itself is like every town of the same modest calibre in this part of Italy. Thin long streets, slanting roofs, coffee-houses with wide curtains drawn before the sashless windows (a fashion shared with the barber and some other small crafts), poor shops, meagrely furnished with the minor articles of fashionable life, and profusely with fruit, macaroni, flax, Parmasan cheese, acquavite, rosolio, and vino d'ogni qualità; and, jammed in between every five or six of higher pretensions, the little indispensable one, where pease, flour, and grain of various kinds, heaped on plates, or piled up in

wooden bowls, are retailed to the humble purchaser. But here too is a piazza painted all over, houses covered with angels and cherubs, fruit and flowers, pilasters and balconies, mixed up with allegorical subjects rather laboriously executed, and headed by a church splashed and dotted with yellow and green paint, in coarse imitation of the green and yellow *anticos*. Every roof is clustered with chimneys of various and graceful forms (chimneys in Italy are a picturesque feature), and in the centre of the place is a marble fountain, round which are gathered women in white veils, cheapening melons, nuts, tomatos, figs, and the red unnatural looking mushroom, which the people here have the courage to eat, though it smells like soap and looks like a mouldy toad. In one corner is a peasant with naked legs, stained deeply with the red juice of the vintage grape, buying long stripes of something looking like an omelet, fried on a tin plate as large as a millstone. In another, an old woman with saucer eyes and a witch's headgear, cowers over a pan of smoking chestnuts, while three or four of his Sardinian majesty's liveried loungers keep an eye on the noisy squabblers who are unloading their donkeys on the pavement, and battling for precedence for their capsicum pods and cabbages.

At half-past four this morning, and perhaps much earlier, the church was open to receive the offerings of the pious heart. None *passed* the door,—every one who approached it entered, and remained a few minutes. There is something beautiful in this early act of devotion, this spreading out of the heart in prayer, before the contact of society, or the shifts and drudgery of every-day life has soiled its purity.

A familiar of the dogana, who had formerly served in the French imperial guards, brought our passport (left on entering the town for official inspection) to us last night. He talked of General Joubert, who expired in an adjacent house, an hour after he had received his death wound in the battle of Novi, in 1799. His beauty, even in death, seemed to have deeply impressed itself on the soldier's memory; and he told us, with an expression of evident satisfaction, that an English general, who had commanded in the Peninsula, passing yesterday through Novi, had visited (more, as the man thought, from a feeling of interest than of curiosity), the chamber in which the brave Joubert had closed his bright, but brief career.

He is happy who only passes through Novi, and we were most happy when we got away from it

this morning. Half-deafened by bells, and half-devoured by musquittoes, and moreover affronted at supper by a toss up of red and yellow toad-stools. They say there are fine villas here, to which the Genoese retire in the hot months, and fine houses in the town; but I did not see either, so cannot bear witness. On quitting Novi the country appears agreeable; we thought it pretty, perhaps relatively. Our dull drive from Milan had lowered our tone from the Alps and Como, to the broken banks and scattered trees about Novi. We took them thankfully, glad to escape from the tedium of eternal vineyards, and hoping for better things as we approached Genoa; and better things already show themselves, as the narrowing valley assumes a more romantic character, throwing out its "castled cliffs," and deepening into wild gorges, often vigorous and striking. As we advance, it goes on telling its own Italian story of perforated turrets, of chestnut groves, alcoves canopied with purple clusters, and rivers filtering their shrunk streams through wide-spreading beds of sand, inundated in winter by their turbulent overflowings. And then the cold filling-up of the picture; poor, comfortless villages, the dirty pavement spread over at intervals with sheets strewed with the golden grain of the eternal maize, which,

dead or alive, is the most prominent feature (the vine alone excepted) of the Italian plains. Dirty women dawdling about the church-door, and ragged bright-looking boys, running in and out, and lifting up the greasy mat that hangs within the entrance, as if the church and the street were equally play-ground.

By and by there will be no such thing as difficulties; horrors are already out of the question. "Le lendemain il fallut passer le Mont Cénis, dont je ne puis prononcer le nom sans frémir," said a clever Frenchwoman some seventy years ago, and now the Mont Cenis is rather an affair of pleasure, a fine morning drive; and this Bochetta, formerly a grim business, is an easy genteel thing with nothing to growl at but the nasty *osterie*, at one of which we would have breakfasted; but there are things stronger even than hunger; disgust conquered appetite, we looked out of the window shuddering, and tried to soothe our offended senses by the sight and the perfume of nature.

Within a few miles of Genoa, the hills (beautifully thrown about) are dotted with country houses of all descriptions, painted in the showiest colours, and laid out in the worst taste, but very striking notwithstanding. No shade, no grass, no

spreading tree throwing its quivering shadow over a carpet of short turf, whose dewy verdure would be a delicious recreation to the eye, half extinguished as it is by the glare of parched earth and blazing houses; and yet something original and identified that makes up, one does not exactly know how, for these deficiencies. The general style is an overgrown house without any visible means of getting at it, two or three stone terraces decorated with flower pots and statues, vineyards running wild, and orange gardens formally planted, closing in the house and its appendages on every side, and over all, a sprinkling of the rich vegetable litter that chokes up every unappropriated corner of an Italian demesne. But then the cool arcades, the colonnades formed of a double tier of pilasters roofed with thick hanging foliage, the trickling fountain, and vast apartments that communicate a feeling of freedom and freshness delightful in this feverish climate, are very redeeming. Sometimes a few cypresses well grouped produce an unexpected effect; and now and then a single stone pine spreads out its tufted coronet proudly, as if it loved its loneliness, and would have no sharer with it in the breath of heaven. This beautiful tree harmonizes better than any other with the sky and scenery of Italy. Trees of

more redundant foliage have a home character, which, lovely as it is, does not so well accord with the southern images, the lonely charm, and decayed magnificence of Italian landscape. It is often found alone, contrasting its living green with the hoar colouring of stony masses, or giving classical elegance to the symmetry of a geometrical garden. Its height and stillness give it a character of pleasing solemnity, while its exquisite verdure and warm bark tint preserve it from that of coldness. This character of solemnity does not belong to this tree alone, but is one of the most striking attributes of Italian landscape; there is an air of stillness, of desertion, of sadness sometimes, in the mountain valleys of Italy, which sensibly affects the imagination; it is melancholy in a political point of view, with reference to its probable causes, but deeply poetical in its effect on the mind. Travellers have made highways of the rudest defiles in Switzerland; every rock, every glacier, every torrent, has been turned inside out to public inspection; but Italy still wraps herself in the mantle of her beauty, and sits down in her loneliness hiding the treasures which she carries in her bosom. No one thinks of going a yard out of the straight road in Italy, and the

landscape, even within sound of the most frequented routes, has often the character and charm of unviolated solitude. In fact the towns in Italy are the objects of attraction, and if a traveller is tempted from his carriage in passing from one to another, it is probably to look at a church, or admire a picture.

CHAPTER III.

APPROACH TO GENOA — GENOA — COUP-D'ŒIL — DETAILS.

A HUM and bustle (indications of the vicinity of a great city rather unusual in this lovely country) tell us that we approach Genoa. It is not indeed a bustle of equipages, nor even of stage coaches, but a coming and going of carts laden with merchandise, of muleteers with loose jackets into which the arms seldom enter, and hats thrown on one side of the head over the gay coloured night-cap, trudging slowly after their fine animals, or riding sideways on the least heavily laden of the file; of peasant girls (very fine creatures sometimes), with natural flowers placed carelessly in the hair, and a dash of powder occasionally thrown in with them; and nearer to the town, plying carriages with three windows at each side, full of gay girls fanning themselves violently in their charming white veils, which make even the plain look pretty, and swarthy men less smartly dressed than their brisk com-

panions; boys playing at mora, soldiers looking on; and sandalled friars with nothing symptomatic of contrition about them but the hempen girdle,—jolly full-blown souls, whose very looks carry absolution with them, and testify to the fidelity of some at least of Boccaccio's sketches. At last comes Genoa, bursting at once upon the sight, and most magnificently,—with a gay dazzle about its white palaces and glittering basin, original and splendid. I do not know why it should be compared to Naples; it appears to me to have quite another character; it has not Capri, nor Ischia, nor Procida,—the purple islands of that beautiful bay,—nor the great Vesuvius, nor the classical recollections that hang upon Baia and Puzzuoli, Missena and Sorrentum, but it has a strong and striking character of its own. A noble amphitheatre proudly decorated, a sweeping bay full of movement, where ships from all parts of the Levant, from the Ionian isles, from the shores of Sicily and Greece, from countries whose very names have witchcraft in them, lie at anchor, sending their busy hum into the streets of the city; boats gliding between the larger vessels, villas rising upon terraces, fortresses upon the hills, and life every where.

So far, so good; but when we desired to be driven

to the Hôtel des Quatre Nations,* we were told that we could not get up to it in a carriage. We unpacked ourselves grumblingly, in the middle of a lane, as full of mire and oranges as Lower Thames Street; and after dabbling through one or two passages of most forbidding aspect, reached the hotel. The first peep was highly characteristic. A saloon of handsome dimensions, with gilding and mirrors, hangings of light-blue satin damask, and a brick-floor encrusted with dirt, looking down upon a sort of terrace projecting sufficiently to shut out the street, and furnished with mutilated statues, and boxes filled with scrubby orange-trees. Beyond this terrace a narrow rampart, with idle sailors in the red cap of the Levant and jackets of all shades, from chocolate to saffron, lounging as sailors always lounge, from Blackwall to the Mola at Naples, with their hands stuck in their sides and their backs against the parapet, looking out for spots in the horizon, or commenting the veiled women who tripped lightly along the narrow footway; and beyond all, the blue Mediterranean with its gay vessels dancing and glittering in the sunbeams, that blazed in at our windows as if the

* There is another Quatre Nations now, and the old one is converted into a private house.

old charioteer, the special Phœbus of Italy, had made a crane-necked turn, and gone back from October to August. All this was good, either as characteristic or from its bright magnificence; I could scarcely tear myself away from the window, and when I did!—but the contrast was still Italian, curiously so,—I found myself obliged to order lights that I might be enabled to arrange my dress a little. The only disengaged bedchambers were two communicating with our sitting room, both looking into one of the black alleys in which Genoa revels. The one enjoys a gleam of day-light when the door of communication is open; the other a sort of ghastly dimness, something perhaps like that which fell upon Lisbon in the time of the earthquake, or the unnatural light of Poussin's deluge. After having made my toilette by candle-light, I returned to our saloon, and was obliged to have the blinds shut to keep out the sunbeams.

To-day being Sunday, the shops are all closed, as hermetically as in London. Fruit, vegetables, and flowers, beautiful and abundant, are the only things exposed for sale. The churches (we looked into three or four) were crowded; all the females of whatever rank, with the exception of four or five, wore the white veil of soft muslin, plain or embroidered, thrown over the hair; the effect of

this simple head-dress is singularly graceful and becoming. We remarked many fine eyes, and soft complexions of a pale but rich brown, (a kind of colouring that is very beautiful when the roundness of the contours indicate health), but no head that could be called really handsome,—agreeable countenances, and graceful deportments, but nothing that wrote itself on the memory.

Only two or three streets here are accessible to carriages; the rest are lanes, and very narrow ones, well paved, but the houses looking dark, dirty, and neglected. Many of those dull dwellings (dull and mean too) are encrusted with marble; indeed, it seems here a drug, kneaded into the walls as if in mere wantonness. The Via Balbi is reckoned magnificent; it is a street of palaces, but it appears to me to want breadth proportionate to its architectural dignity. We who are "citizens of no mean city," as far as streets are concerned, consider breadth as essential to splendour. In hot countries, narrow streets are preferable, as being less laid open to the excessive glare of the sun, but they are not so magnificent; and yet there is something fine in the dark lowering perspective, the long architectural funnel, into which the eye runs. The Balbi is not, I think, wide enough for broad daylight splendour, and too wide for picturesque gloom.

Beggars abound here, doleful, persecuting beggars, but miserable as they seem, I never can think that want wears so woful an aspect in a warm climate as in a cold one. The poor in southern countries, however dirty and wretched they may appear, feel the pinch of penury less keenly than the inhabitants of the north; they draw more on nature, and less on the means (always costly to the needy) which man invents to supply the absence of its bounteous influence. Sunshine, macaroni, religious festivals, some ells of coffee, or other coloured-drugget, a little coarse stuff and a showy shawl, or a head cloth, are all that an Italian peasant requires. I count the two last articles amongst those of necessity; for the one or the other is always (according to the injunction of the Apostle) thrown over the head or laid upon it whenever the church is visited. All that our labourers spend in firing, window-tax, hob-nailed shoes, warm food, strong winter clothing, and the *something* to keep the cold out of the stomach is spared here. Wherever the climate is warm and equal, fruit and vegetables are cheap, and supply the place of that substantial and more expensive nourishment which a northern appetite, sharpened by cold, requires. When there is a little superfluity here, rich gold earrings and necklaces of coral, garnet, and even pearl make their appearance.

A divine evening: took a boat and rowed within the bay, and out to the eastern extremity of the city, where houses of seven stories high are huddled together about the bridge of Carignano with considerable effect. The view of Genoa from the bay is very fine, but inferior to the first coup-d'œil, and much below that of Naples taken from a similar point. Yet few things can surpass the magical effect of that arm of the shore which embraces the bay on one side, with its spires and domes, and variously tinted buildings, amongst which the cupola of the fine church of Santa Maria di Carignano shows loftily. How beautifully it rests upon the sea, and when the sun sets on it, how the yellow light seems to lift it out of the waters! The amphitheatre too of dark hills, has prodigious character, and a fine serious subduing tone, which chastens the splendour of the picture it encloses.

We rowed out amidst the intricacies of the shipping, and thought it droll, and somewhat touching, to read on the stern of a vessel, the "Anne of Swansea," the "Sisters of Bideford," or the "Hope of London," with an Italian sun pouring down upon us, and all the strong features of an Italian port spread out before our eyes. The sight of ships from England opened a hoard of thought, and made the past seem again the

present,—every thing that links itself with home is so heartfelt; even the dog who kept guard on deck had something familiar in its growl, something that brought the Thames and its floating forests vividly and rapidly before us. But sentiment apart, the variety was very amusing; there were ships from Cuba, Lima, and many American ports; from the Levant, Sicily, Naples, Trieste, Odessa, and a hundred other places of sweet sounding name; transports lying at anchor crowded with troops from Sardinia, long boats, and short boats, and boats of all shapes and sizes, pushing off from them full of soldiers, noisy and joyous at returning from what they look upon as a kind of deportation; with the soft lustre of a declining sun shining on those and a multitude of other gay objects animated and inanimate. It certainly is beautiful and striking, but still not so beautiful or striking as Naples. It has not the same character of oriental splendour, nor the same softness or high finish.

One of our boatmen wished to put up a sail; I objected, as the wind was against us; he did not seem to relish my apprehensions, vehemently exclaiming that he could manage his boat if the heavens rained stones. His taste in beauty was less Italian than his pomp of metaphor. He had

attended on an English gentleman the day before, who had a daughter, a "bella giovane," with such a profusion of red hair—a perfect comet; "tutti rossi! tutti rossi!" he exclaimed in an ecstasy of admiration. We could not learn the name of the fair Aurora, but the impression made by her natural halo was prodigious.

Lion-hunting is always a fatiguing pastime, but at Genoa a black penitent might put it down in his items of atonement. To-day, six hours' hard walking on hot pavement, or still more fatiguing standing, and the result, three churches, three palaces, and a villa. The principal church (l'Annunziata) is lined, paved, and pillared with alabaster of Gazzo, and marbles of various colours, and spoiled (at least for the present) by draperies of red, white, and blue silk, sprinkled with gold and silver flowers. I saw nothing else remarkable, except an altar converted into an absolute bed of roses, and a monk in his confessional, holding a handkerchief to his face and giving an ear each to two shabby-looking penitents, who seemed both to gabble out their abominations at the same time. The one was a plain elderly woman, a hard working sinner, who seemed in a hurry to throw down her load and be off; the other was younger, with a disastrous eye and penitential visage, yet with

something in it too, that denoted one willing to atone for past offences, but who had not quite made up her mind about the future. I was puzzled to know how the holy father could divide and proportion the sins and atonements, or separate distinctly the two confessions pressed on him at the same moment. This was his secret, but it was done, and apparently to the satisfaction of all parties, before we left the church. The monk had vanished, the confessional was empty, but I recognised one of the penitents gliding out before us with a great increase of gaiety in her eye.

From the church we hurried to the Palazzo Reale (formally Durazzo), and had more than seventy steps to mount to get at the show apartments; but we had prompt payment, ready money, for our fatigue, when we got to the top—such a magnificent Paul Veronese! Mary Magdalen anointing the feet of our Saviour in the house of the Pharisee. She is still a sinner, with braided hair and rich garments, such as that great painter loved to give to his female figures, but the whole is superb; a fine gathering of dark heads (his own striking profile as usual introduced), and the touch of architectural grandeur which generally identifies his powerful pictures. There are many other fine pictures here, but this one is worth them all.

Another Durazzo, the Brignole, the Spinola, and many more palaces, possess fine pictures; Genoa is rich in living portraits,—portraits that one dares not trust with a secret. I should as soon think of conspiring against the state, before the "reverend signiors" of the assembled senate, as in the presence of those lofty Dorias or Durazzi, or even of their gentle wives, who look and listen till you feel almost confused at having discussed their charms as it were in their hearing. Vandyke was a powerful master; few have possessed in a higher degree the art of giving vitality to their portraits. Unlike the glossy monotony of Sir Peter Lely, (whose courtly shepherdesses are all as like each other as the fifty daughters of Danaus, in the melodrame), his personages have the air of life so freshly on them, that when we see the same portraits a second time, it is like meeting old acquaintances, family people with whom one has lived in friendly intercourse. We contract an intimacy with them, as we do with the dramatis personæ of Sir Walter Scott's novels. Who that has ever contemplated Vandyke's portrait of Charles I., but fancies he has seen and known that melancholy visage? or read Rob Roy, without the conviction of having been personally acquainted with Baillie Jarvie?

I abstain from Columbus. Every one who has been to Genoa has sung or said something on that subject, so nothing is left for the gleaners. If the actual spot of his birth had been ascertained, I should have visited it, for he was great (in the true sense of greatness) and unfortunate.* The streets here are paved (they say) with marble; so are half the dirty courts at Rome, and with serpentino too, and other fine things; but scraping and scratching soon brings it to the level of mere stone, —nothing is gained in effect. Not so for the frescoes that decorate (not always, but often) the exterior of the houses; *they* hang out their certificates of a dry climate very effectively, and handsomely sometimes. Perhaps the simplicity of marble might be better as to taste, but I love this crowding of southern images,—this affluence of proof that the bounty of the sun is not overrated. Such things become Italy; her beauty is identified with sunshine: no one ever anticipates or recollects a scene in Italy without adding a bright day to it.

There is no end to the marble and alabaster, the velvet and gilding, lavished on the palaces of

* Passing since through the village of Cogoleto, between Savona and Genoa, we found it puts in positive claims to this honour, and even shows the house in which he was born.

Genoa. I made a note or two, but found it an overpowering business, so rubbed them out again. But there is one saloon,—that of the Palazzo Serra,—which, for its luxury of gold and precious finery, and the effect produced by mere splendour, is quite matchless. It is like Solomon's temple, "overlaid with gold;" the columns are of burnished gold; the panels strewed with pulverized lapis lazuli, and wreathed with various coloured gold, beautifully wrought. Caryatides of the purest marble support the richly painted ceiling, and mirrors multiply a hundred fold the arabesques, the bass-reliefs, the brilliant girandoles, that fill up every space. This sounds gaudy, but it is only gorgeous; there is nothing offensively fine; the leading colours, azure and gold, harmonize richly, without glare or tawdriness. The whole would be perfect *in its way*, if the saloon were of nobler dimensions; but though handsome and lofty, it is not sufficiently spacious for the splendour of its decorations.

Looked in at another fine church; great preparations for some coming festival,—I forget what. I am not fond of a show between four walls; however fine it may be, it never seems to me so striking as a show in the open air. There is in all out of door pageants a vague perspective, an uncertainty as to what is coming, a grandeur in the filling-up,

—an amplitude of uncramped space, in which every thing finds room; and then the broad moving masses, (which, when wedged together within a given limit, condense into a mere stationary crowd), shifting their form and colouring as they advance or recede, receive the beams of the sun, or the shadows which pass over it, and have such advantages of motion and colouring. A vast church illuminated for divine service, is fine; but a forest, dimly and distantly lighted, would be incomparably finer. One may imagine a midnight mass in the deserts of the Thebiads, and compare it with St. Peter's, even at the lighting up of the cross.

The Italian taste in chimneys is peculiarly elegant; no matter how mouldering, raw, or staring the house may be, there is always something graceful and redeeming about this usually frightful utility. We stepped out from the show apartments of the Palazzo Brignoli on a spacious terrace, which constitutes the roof of another part of the building. The chimneys were placed at regular intervals, each having the form of a column, ornamented with trophies, and terminated by a vase containing an aloe, or something that looked like one. The effect was so good that we believed them to be merely decorative, until our cicerone pointed out to us a light smoke issuing from the centre of the leaves.

In our walk to the church of San Stefano, where a powerful picture of the first martyrdom adorns the high altar, we passed the promenade of the Acquasola. When it has trees large enough to afford shade, it will be very agreeable; it seems a new thing, but has a superb look over the sea, the mountains, and the richly broken ground that intervenes between them and the town. A road, a sort of exterior boulevard, now making round the town, will give the Genoese a Corso of which they are desperately in need. The paucity of drives and public walks, is one of the chief drawbacks to a residence here; a carriage is of little use, only two or three streets being accessible in that way, and the lanes are (to say the best of them) not very inviting to pedestrians. I suppose the Genoese *exclusives* seldom descend from their airy terraces, for amongst the crowd of females who are constantly scudding up and down the alleys, few appear to be of the higher class; sometimes a light figure flits by with an air of superior gentility, but the mezzaro* is so levelling, and all the women dress so freshly and are so daintily shod, that a stranger finds it difficult to pick out the distinctive threads which a

The Genoese veil

practised eye can of course separate and assort at a glance. There is certainly little to tempt an inhabitant of the higher regions into the close, narrow, and crowded streets; strangers have no alternative, certain things must be seen, and there is but one way of getting at them; but for the higher powers who dwell in palaces, and who can bask on their gay terraces when sunshine and warmth are desirable, or make their own atmosphere of orange flowers and all other odoriferous things, they can feel but little inclination to hazard the foul contagion of the streets.*

These terraces are one of the most charming features of Genoa. Many of them look upon the gardens and terraces of other houses, others to the mountains or upon the sea, and some are so high that the street below looks not a span wide, and the passers like figures in a fantoccini. The best apartments are (as usual in Italy) up several flights of stairs, with windows opening on these marble terraces; and from this peculiarity comes, I suppose, the old story that the houses of Genoa are covered with gardens.

* Since writing the above, Genoa has been much embellished; a new street, (Carlo Felice) a new square, a new theatre, and a new boulevard, all very handsome, have sprung up.

There is a great deal of character about the villas which the Genoese hang upon their hills, though the houses seem to our English eyes overgrown in proportion to their contracted domains, often little more than two or three terraces suspended on arches and covered with orange-trees, lemons, or acacias, mingled with the dark fig (here magnificent) or the paler olive; but their southern associations give them a colouring of poetry. They do not call up rural images of the familiar kind, such as are awakened by the sight of a hay-field, a green lane, or a thicket of hawthorn; we do not think of Madge or Cicely, of Hodge the ploughman or the miller's boy, but of downright nymphs of antiquity, and swains to match them; disguised gods who had much ado to hide their divinity under the shepherd's bonnet, while they sat upon the rocks piping to the fair, half-dressed, statue-like creatures, who peeped out upon them through the orange-trees, and were caught in their nets like so many little fishes. Or if the mind flies away from the reprobate gods of old pagan story, as not having enough of intimate reality about them, in steps Shakspeare leading Juliet and Desdemona, the tender Viola following with love's own smile shining in her eyes, and Beatrice fanning herself with the wing of a parrot.

Then come Boccaccio, and da Porto, and Giraldi Cintio, with their legends of love and hate, such as sunny skies and passionate natures engender, and their rainbow tales of sad and joyous spirits.

There were certain simple arrangements of words which Madame de Staël could never hear without emotion, such as "Les orangers du royaume de Grenade, et les citronniers des rois Maures." This seems fanciful,—but it was a spring touched, a train of thought awakened, a remembrance perhaps of home striking on the heart in the hour of banishment, and sounding as the song of Sion would have done to the wanderers of Judæa, when they sat by the waters of Babylon and wept. I can easily imagine how the mention of orange-groves and marble balconies might shake the soul of an Italian exile, who could listen without sympathy to a tale of sorrow unconnected with his own intense recollections.

I do not exactly know how it is, but I sometimes intend to note down a thought that crosses my mind, and lo! a page comes out of it. I just meant to say a word about the magic of association, and how a leaf, or a flower, or a sound, knocks against the heart of one person, while they are nothing but simply a sound, or a leaf, or a flower, to the senses of another; and all on

a sudden I find myself on the banks of the Euphrates, not well knowing how I got there. I wish the game of mora played in the ruelle under my window last night, had been as unreal as my dreamings. I should have pushed off my musquitto veil (one is obliged to muffle up the head here), and blown it away at a breath. But it was a down-right material set to, and lasted till near day-break. This game of mora was played (they say) at the wedding of Cupid and Psyche, introduced, I suppose, by Mercury; for the whole skill lies in a quick eye and flexible fingers. But the loud sudden calling out of the numbers, at certain intervals, is as perfect an invention for breaking one's rest, as Aristotle's brass bason, or the "remember death!" of some relentless monkish order,—I forget which.

The people here are noisy, and sing in the streets all night, "howling like Irish wolves against the moon:" I never heard such roaring. —Bottom, the weaver, when he enacts the lion, is nothing to it. Should the driver of a plying vehicle encounter a cart, he bellows as if it were a herd of unicorns; and if three or four women get about a fruit-stall, you would fancy from the clamour that a mob were gathering for turbulent purposes.

All strong passions, the angry ones excepted, use the language of tears; I saw a boy in the street this morning remonstrating with a gentleman, who had probably given him less than he expected for some trifling service. I did not understand what they said, but their gestures were sufficiently indicative. The gentleman was inflexible, and the boy burst into tears; they were certainly tears of avarice; he looked well dressed, and over-fed, but I never saw disappointed sordidness so legibly expressed, as in the glance which he cast upon the modicum in his open palm. There are tears and tears; nothing can be more heart touching or meaner than tears; how different the tears of my divine Hagar and of this snivelling boy.

Mounted up this morning to a show villa (La Villetta Negro), and took in from thence the whole stretch of the city, the sea beyond it, the fine mountains that enclose the gulf in their wide bow, and the lesser amphitheatre within which the town lies spread out, and stretching gently upwards. All the verdure about Genoa falls into the back-ground, and serves as a corrective to the white glare of the city itself. The arches of gray stone overhung with thick vegetation, which connect the inequalities of the ground, and the

double tier of pilasters supporting roofs of vines and forming terraces of tufted foliage, are features almost peculiar to the scenery about Genoa. We counted thirteen convents, pointed out to us by the gardener, who said there were several others near, though not visible. In a pavilion in the grounds,—(query, may a multiplication of narrow terraces be called grounds?)—we found a small collection of English books. Johnson, Hume, Blair, Burns, Shakspeare, Blackstone's Commentaries, Clarissa, some odd volumes of our best Essayists, a Sporting Dictionary, and a few et cæteras.

The proprietor of the villa (a noble Genoese) is a poet. I opened two of his productions that lay upon a table; one, a volume of sermons in rhyme; the other, an ode or dirge, I have forgotten which, to the memory of Lord Byron. In the botanical garden is the only palm-tree I have yet seen at this side of Rome. I recollect but one even there,—it is in the garden of a convent. At Terracina they become frequent. In itself, it is not a beautiful tree, but has the odour of Palestine, the desert and the well, the camel and the caravansera upon it.

We had a mind for the play to-night, but looking up at the bill of fare, perceived that the price

of admission to the best places was seven-pence; and knowing what a true garlick mob is in Italy, took fright at the idea of the entertainment and the company likely to be forthcoming at fourteen sous a-head. A new theatre is in rapid progress. The Italians are probably not so dramatic as the French; a town in France, as wealthy and as splendid as Genoa, would vie with Paris in theatres. Perhaps the drama in Italy is considered merely as a delassement, in France it is an essential. The French frequent their theatres not to out-talk the players, as we do sometimes, or to receive visitors, or play at cards, as the Italians do,—sometimes; but to look and listen with intense interest, to be excited, agitated, charmed, distressed; and when the curtain drops, to discuss the performance as earnestly as if the fate of the nation depended on the result, and with a critical acumen, and delicacy of taste, which go down very low in the scale of society.

It was on our return from the church of St. Ambrosia,—inlaid with many coloured marbles, and further adorned by the pencil of Guido and of Rubens, that entering the cathedral just at night-fall, we found the high-altar illuminated, and the organ pealing the service for the dead. One of the canons had expired that morning; the

corpse was placed on a bier below the altar, supported in a sitting posture by pillows covered with black velvet, the body enveloped in a mantle of scarlet cloth, and the face exposed to the pale shadowless glare that fell upon it from the lamps placed round the coffin. The presence of death is always awful,—and the swelling organ, the solemn chant, the light falling in broad masses on the projecting columns, while the arched recesses were thrown into deep shadow, the grand but gloomy bearing of a church partially illuminated, all combined to produce an effect deeply impressive.

But whilst contemplating the last honours paid to dust and ashes, to one so soon to be utterly blotted out from the records of life, a thought of fever and contagion darted across my mind. I asked our cicerone of what disease the canon had died? He said, of the putrid epidemic now raging in the town. I instantly hurried my young party out of the church, as if the roof was falling on them, and scarcely ventured to breathe as we passed hastily through the narrow streets, of whose fœtid odours I had never before been so sensible. Supped on grapes, supposing them an antidote to fever. Never saw any so magnificent, but such bunches as one of the old rich Venetian painters would throw over the brim of an enchased vase on

the banquetting table of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, or fling amongst the wine cups at the marriage in Canaan. Fruit is cheap and abundant here; our grapes were two *soldi* a pound to strangers, which means, I should think, one or less to a native, according to Italian computation.

All well to-day, "pas un mot de Caron," the canon died of an old invincible phthisic, and the raging fever was the invention of our show-man. The vulgar in all countries love to frighten the credulous. It is an exercise of power,—an indulgence prohibited in general by their position in society,—and they particularly love to exert it over minds, to whose will they are by their condition subservient.

A superb view of Genoa from the gallery that surrounds the cupola of Santa Maria di Carignano, finer in some respects than that from the Villetta Negro. To get at this church, we passed through a fishy suburb, apparently peopled by priests and sailors, and swarming with beggars; but they are the common growth of Genoa. As we returned over the Ponte di Carignano (whose airy arches are suspended over houses six or seven stories high), an unfortunate lady, in a state of mental derangement, attempted to throw herself from a high window looking down upon it. Some soldiers,

who had seen her standing on the ledge, crept cautiously into the room, and seized her at the moment when she was about to fling herself off. The crowd which had collected in the street showed creditable marks of compassionate interest, speaking to each other in a subdued tone, indicative of real feeling. We could learn nothing either of the poor lady's story, or her probable fate; she, I hope, has friends, yet the horrors of madness defy even the alleviation of friendship; pain may be soothed, grief mitigated by the efforts of affection, but for the alienated mind there is no balm, not even that of sympathy. Was again disappointed in the charms of the Genoese women, of whom we saw shoals this evening; yesterday we met a very charming specimen, with the prettiest tripping gait imaginable; in general they have a kind of bold beauty that might be vulgar but for its paleness. Perhaps the women of Italy, generally speaking, are less soft than expressive, but they are often magnificent, and the men too sometimes; amongst the peasants one frequently meets with heads from which a sculptor might model his youthful Sauls or Davids. The St. John of the Tribune * is fine, but we saw a boy at Fondi incomparably finer—and in the same way quite.

Whenever we have asked what was the object best worth seeing in the environs of Genoa, the answer has invariably been "the Grotto." So we took advantage of an exquisite morning, and, leaving the blue and sparkling bay, the bright city, the scudding sail, and busy population, all behind us, drove through the suburb of San Pietro d'Arena, saluting the fanal, or light-house and the ships in quarantine as we passed, lauding the finely detached promontory of Porto Fino, the embayed coast, and the sweep of mountains that stretch off towards Nice, purpling in the warm haze, and telling stories to the fancy. Fishermen with high red caps, bronzed complexions, and bare legs of a deeper olive even than their faces, loitered on the strand, hanging out their nets to dry, or gossiping idly. It was a duplicate of the picture we had seen on first approaching Genoa; priests, friars, muleteers, women, and sunshine. Good grouping, full of character and contradictions, lazy movement, and rapid expression—but the Grotto! Travellers have often to regret lost hours, and

"Fair occasions gone for ever by,"

but never was time so utterly lost, as that spent in visiting the grotto of Sesto. A dirty path through a sort of garden fore-court, all foul and tangled, leads to a cabaret, adjoining which, and on the same

floor, is the brick and mortar contrivance to which our evil stars had led us. A grotto of masonry, decorated with bits of looking-glass, in the middle of a village! I have always from my childish days disliked grottoes, a distate arising from my having been put down to Telemachus as task-work, before I was old enough to comprehend its beauties. Though full of respect both for the son of Ulysses and the Archbishop of Cambray, I never have been able to get through a page of it since; and whenever I hear the word grotto pronounced, the well-remembered morning lesson, the eternal "Calypso ne pouvait se consoler du départ d'Ulysse," knells on my ear. A Genoese Timon threw away two millions of francs on this tasteless caprice, which has not even the recommendation of coolness. I wish the Tritons had caught him up, and made pearls of his eyes, or pickled him into an anchovy (they are famous here), before he had done this sacrilege, and lost us a whole morning spent in running after his vile conceits, when we might have sailed in the blue bay, or pushed out into the Mediterranean, or coasted shores full of picture and poetry, and dreamed classical dreams while we looked on beautiful realities.

Stopped in returning at the Palazzo Doria, the palace of the renowned Andrea, who died a citizen

when he might have gone off in royal harness. The interior is not shown, probably because it is not fit to be seen. The gardens, deliciously placed, with terraces washed by the sea, and fountains, seats, and balustrades, all of pure white marble, enough to ornament (and lavishly) a dozen palaces, are in the old wretched taste, very little better than the "green dragon with the tail of ground ivy." A symmetrical arrangement of flower knots choked up with rank grass, edged with box, and beautified by pyramids of cypress,—and this in the country of the orange and myrtle! where every beautiful and fragrant thing springs up almost spontaneously.

CHAPTER IV.

GENOA — RETURN TO MILAN — SESTO — CALENDA —FERRY AT SESTO — TO ARONA.

WHY is it that the prisons in Italy are still the noxious dungeons of stagnant barbarism, while the hospitals seem to have kept pace with the progress of humanity? I cannot enter into the details to which this question might give rise, but the fact is so. The Albergo dei Poveri, a general hospital for the sick and aged, and a house of industry for those who are able to work, as also an asylum for orphans, and children deserted by their parents, is a vast establishment, in a fine and airy situation. The wards are clean and spacious, though perhaps not so well ventilated as those in a similar establishment at Naples, but this more from choice than a want of means. We were there at the dinner hour; the meal consisted of an ample portion of rice soup with vegetables, and a moderate one of bread;

wine is allowed every other day, and meat on Sundays; the luxury of a table-cloth is also permitted. The meal was served by women, who distributed the portions with great celerity and neatness, while a priest walked round the table, regulating and admonishing, and a boy, elevated above the rest, read a long grace to which no one appeared to pay the slightest attention. The women weave linen, coloured handkerchiefs, ribbons, and various coarse stuffs, and embroider on muslin very delicately; they seemed healthy and happy, and were very clean, some were pretty. The men manufacture carpets, clothing for the galley slaves, and various other articles. In cases of insubordination or other misconduct, solitary confinement, proportioned in its duration to the nature of the offence, is the punishment inflicted both on males and females; they are allowed half the profits of their industry, and may purchase fruit, wine, or any thing else they choose. The period of stay in this asylum is unrestricted. No one is compelled to remain, or obliged to go; it is all a matter of free choice; such at least was the account given to us by our conductor.

In the chapel is a Pieta (basso relievo) by Michael Angelo, full of beauty and expression. This powerful master was not often tender, but he could

be so; the proof is here. I once knew a clever man who greatly admired Càravaggio, and used to place him on a line with Michael Angelo. Caravaggio too was a genius, one full of strong, broad-shouldered ideas; a perturbed and gloomy spirit, throwing his dark soul out upon his canvass with startling effect; but he did not think or feel like Michael Angelo, his genius was not sublime; he painted like a coarse bad man, of monstrous capacity, but not like one who had unsealed the book of judgment, or lifted up the Pantheon and hung it in the air.*

But again to the Albergo dei Poveri. The women are under the superintendence of a community of sisters of charity. It is impossible to see these meritorious and self-devoted women, without feelings of sincere respect; but the venerables who floated through the wards of the hospital in immense stiffened-out aureoles, were, to say the least, not conciliating. Virtue unretinued often makes its way to admiration more surely than when it sends a herald before it to knock at our gate, and enforce homage by sound of trumpet. The sister who accompanied us took snuff with an uncharitable air, as if she smelt infection, and

* Michael Angelo's lofty boast is well known.

glanced us over as if she herself was safe in Abraham's bosom, and we at the purple and fine linen side of the gulf. She would insist on our inspecting some paltry needle work, and when we declined purchasing, looked venomous. I have so sincere a veneration for these admirable women; the purity of their motives, their courage, zeal, and usefulness belong to so high an order of virtue, that I had almost looked upon them as beings of an intermediate class, with more of heaven than earth about them; consecrated to a mission of tenderness, and fulfilling it as angels might do; and could hardly forgive our cross vulgar old woman, for disenchanting me—though it was but for a moment, for I soon returned to my allegiance.

This evening, as we looked about for sights, a servant of the cathedral gravely showed us a miraculous image of the Virgin, and a chapel, containing the genuine ashes of John the Baptist. Into this chapel females are not permitted to enter; why, he could not explain, but seemed, some how or other, to think it right and fitting.

There is a sort of salique law occasionally enforced here; the free-port (the depot of foreign merchandise) is shut against females, but they share the prohibition with priests and soldiers.—

So said our guide, who forgot to put us in mind of the *sacro catino*,—the famous dish of emerald, or green glass (the knowing ones differ), presented to Solomon by the Queen of Sheba; and we actually left this cathedral of vast size and little pillars, cased in black and white marble and striped after the best zebra pattern, without seeing this debateable raree show.

I love the Italian churches, with their broad aisles, vast and unfrittered,—no pews, no divisions, no aristocratical screenings; all kneeling together, the high and mighty and the lowly, on the same pavement; all sending up their thanksgiving, or their prayer, to the same great being in whose eyes all are equal. No dread of vulgar contact, no elbowing of the tattered penitent. I shall never forget the impression made upon me, on my first visit to St. Peter's at Rome, by a young lady who came into the church, folded up in a cachemere and followed by a servant in gorgeous livery; her appearance was that of a *petite-maitresse*, as far as dress was concerned, but her air was devout and collected; she passed on slowly to the illuminated shrine of the saint, and inserted herself amidst a group of masons in their working dresses, kneeling with them on the pavement, and praying earnestly. This was beautiful,

and similar acts of humility are performed every hour in the day in every church in Italy.

Principles are better things than impulses, even when both are good. Religion in this country seems less a principle than a feeling; it does not appear to influence the moral conduct,—but for the period during which its forms are exercised, the abstraction seems deep and real. Whether the visible image of the Saint or Virgin then implored be not the paramount object of adoration, may be questioned, and probably the zeal awakened through the medium of the imagination can only be sustained by the same means. The interceding Saint, protecting Madonna, or familiar image, long known, and long revered,—implored in sorrow, and relied upon in repentance, receives the fervent homage of the tender and devout. The enlightened may see in these palpable forms only a memorial, and while kneeling before a terrible crucifix, may lift up their souls to the Divine Nature triumphing over sin and death, or send out their thoughts from the foot of the decorated altar to him whose "way is on the sea, and his path in the great waters." But the vulgar,—"the great vulgar and the small,"—do they look beyond the identical picture or statue (always invested with miraculous powers)?—I should doubt it.

After having toiled through churches and palaces till feet and spirits are weary, and the head a chaos of gold and marble, of galleries and colonnades, of airy vestibules and magnificent staircases, we returned to our saloon, and found the sun setting behind the fanal and lighting up the bay, the hills, the shipping, with a yellow lustre that might make even Claude throw away his pencil in despair, yet of which that pencil alone can convey an idea. What an amazing sunset picture! The flood of living light poured on the waters through the clustering masts, the fanal upright and burnished, the mole running out from it, half in light and half in shadow, bales heaped about, vessels taking in their lading or depositing their merchandise, mules standing sleepily under their burthens, all the colouring and classical splendour of Claude and Poussin, and all the details which Vernet loved to seize and transfer in their first freshness to his canvass, are here, with the pulse of life in them, and the warmth of real sunshine.

And now a short half hour has elapsed, and the yellow radiance disappears; lights twinkle in the gliding boats, the busy hum of industry gradually subsides, the sound of evening bells swells across the bay from the convent and from

the ship, with all its monastic associations and its fulness of home and habitation. It is a domestic sound, and yet a melancholy one; the heart feels that it is so, without being able to tell why.

I could not live in a narrow street at Genoa, at least I should be very sorry to do so, nor should I from choice select any part of it as a residence; but if the fates willed it, I would fix upon a spot from whence I could see the sun go down upon the sea, and the fire of the light-house glowing at night like a bright star in the heavens. But though not, perhaps, a desirable residence for strangers, yet there is something about Genoa that is very delightful to a casual visitor, it has great life, character, and originality; movement and variety within its walls, and without—the sunny stillness, the unbroken repose, which converts sensation into thought.

No words can arrest the shifting aspects, or present a living likeness of the exquisite combinations of nature. We say "this is beautiful, that is superb," we exhaust the vocabulary of superlatives, without conveying to others the image with which we are ourselves impressed, even in its faintest tracings. The pencil is more effective than the pen. While the most laborious details and the truest local colouring fail in giving indi-

viduality to a description, the scenery of the Mediterranean ports and the ineffable colouring of Italian skies have been thrown with such bright fidelity upon canvass, that the eye at once acknowledges the living originals of all which the pencil of Claude has imbedded in the memory. The same light dances on the waters, the same delicious coast brightens in the same golden sunbeams. It is not that objects are recalled, they are recognised, just as at Venice, where one finds that to be familiar with Canaletti's views, is almost to have seen the thing itself. In short, painted scenery, if faithful, is like a well-executed portrait, and description like a black profile; it may serve to recall a well-known face, but can convey no idea of one to which we are strangers.

Again churches and palaces; what a number of things are first rate, and superb, and deeply interesting, in guide-books, &c., that are mere pasteboard and pipe clay after all. If I were obliged to write a *real* book, with the idea of its ever having a reader, I should merely point out what had seemed to me most interesting, and say "stop here—or go there—and see with your own eyes;" it is ten to one better than looking through magnifiers, and when you have put them aside, staring and wondering where all the fine things have va-

nished to. Yet I would not cry down the palaces, for they are noble and grand,—not an out-at-elbows grandeur as one often sees in Italy, but a perfectly sustained magnificence. The palaces of Genoa are the very brocade of architecture, and, though we may prefer the dignity of simplicity, yet, like the rich tissues and sumptuous velvets of Paul Veronese, they are perfect in their way.

To-day we leave this city of contrasts—of palaces and lanes—meanness and magnificence,—nothing intermediate. Greatly inferior to Naples in local beauty and classical association, but more striking as a maritime port, and possessing in itself and its position much that is splendid and imposing. It is deficient in the air of cleanliness and general comfort which might make it a desirable residence for strangers, and its situation between a mountain and a gulf, though the circumstance to which it owes the splendour of its coup-d'œil, is precisely that which disqualifies it from being an agreeable abode. At one side, the country is of course cut off, and at the other, the necessity of eternally mounting is a bar to the delicate, the indolent, or the unaccustomed. No table ground, no green level, no public walk (as yet) worth mentioning; no squares in which a lounger might exercise his muscles; every thing

must be toiled for,—a necessity which, however salutary it may be in a moral point of view, makes hard work in a physical one, and the result is a fluttering feeling of imprisonment, a longing for space and scope, which the wide spread of sea rather augments than gratifies.

The Genoese females "dedicate their beauty to the sun," and run about without any other covering on the head than their white veils, which leave the face quite exposed; yet their pale complexions are soft and unshrivelled, they have a bold and conscious air, mixed up with a certain gracefulness of deportment; their step is assured without being masculine, and the full short petticoat displays to advantage sometimes a well-turned ancle, and always a becoming shoe. A pretty kind of blind is common here, as in many other parts of Italy, the upper half of which hangs flat against the window and shades the room; while the lower half projects from it, and allows the person who sits within to be partially visible, in a soft shaded way, which becomes a graceful figure and gives it a colouring of Spanish romance.

The *facchini* here demand five francs for taking your luggage or parcels from your carriage to the hotel, though the weight were only

five pounds, or the distance five yards; and as it is an imposition licensed by government, there is nothing gained by contending against it. The Italians, good tempered civil souls as they are, do love to cheat a little sometimes; yet they have their own ideas of honesty too: twice it has happened to me to forget my rings and other trinkets of some value at the inn, where we had slept, and each time the person into whose hands they had fallen pursued us to a considerable distance to restore them, and that evidently without the least expectation of reward.

October 7th. Slept at Novi,—"if sleep that may be called, which sleep was none." I might as well have watched armour with Don Quixote, as gone to bed last night. Lay awake for hours, bullying the musquittoes, and just as I had fallen asleep, and was dreaming of being at a great hunting party in the forest of Montmorency, I was roused up to dress, take a cup of muddy coffee, and pack myself up in the corner of the carriage, all in the space of ten minutes.

Found the Po swelling out proudly, and heard it at a distance puffing and blowing like a warhorse, or a grampus, disdaining to be eked out by sand-banks, and boldly effacing all traces of their usurpation. We were obliged to wade on foot,

through a bed of mud for a mile or two before we reached the bridge, through whose centre arch the river had crept modestly eight days before; but a night or two of rain had swelled it into wicked dignity, and we were very grateful for even its qualified forbearance; as from what we had heard on the road, we expected to have been forced into a circuit that would have cost us a day.

When we visited the Certosa, I was so occupied by monks and malachite, philosophy and lapis lazuli, that I forgot Francis the First, just as I had forgotten the *sacro catino*. As I passed to-day, my memory condescended to awake and tell me, that tradition names it as the spot on which he surrendered himself prisoner after the battle of Pavia. So thinking of the gallant and *gallant* king, forth came the whole field of the cloth of gold sweeping before me, and I dreamt for full half an hour "by Shrewsbury clock," of that gorgeous tilting match, where the royal blue beard, that was to be, showed his *pattes de velour;* for his unmatured claws were still wrapped up in embroidery.

8th.—Milan full to overflowing. Shoals of English, some bound for Florence, some for Rome, and others again turning their faces towards the glittering Alps, with whom I am just at this

moment quite in love; they cheered our way so kindly this morning by their occasional appearance, whenever the pollard willows, and other stumpy things that bristle up fiercely by the roadside, made way for them.

There are people here talking of going to Venice; I wish they would say nothing about it, but steal off quietly. I grow envious when I hear it named. Yet few agree with me about the attractions of that beautiful and most original city. Many find a visit of five or six days quite enough, and others think it too much. Yet the mantle of the mighty magician is upon it, it breathes of Shakspeare, and when the moon is up breathes too of paradise; a paradise, it is true, of sea and palaces, but full of poetry and music, of soft and glowing images. But it is rather the fashion now to cry down Venice, as it is to cry up Florence, a city beautiful certainly in itself, and deeply interesting from the treasures of art it contains, and its historical and poetical recollections, but sometimes perhaps spoken of with exaggeration. This is probably owing to the influence of the six great names connected with it,—Dante, Michael Angelo, Galileo, Petrarca, Boccaccio and Machiavelli! How impossible it is for the imagination to remain untouched by their splendour! But the jewel of

the Adriatic has strong claims too; the first view of Venice (if the sky be in good tone) is absolutely magical. The melting together of sea and sky, their line of separation lost in the uniformity of tint which gives to the city itself, and to its girdling islands, the appearance of being suspended in the air, while the shadows seeming to run down into the depths of the clear water, look like other cities and other islands floating beneath, is quite unimaginable. For myself, I love Venice, and always grieve when I think of its probable destiny; our children's children may listen to the stories of Venetian glory, as we do to the exploits of the Cid, or the fortunes of the Abencerages, and may talk of the famed city, its hundred islands, its palaces washed by the Adriatic, its masques and revelry, its great captains and throned Doges, as we do of Bagdad, and the adventures of Haroun Alraschid. What a pity that such a beautiful bubble should burst, like one of common air!

World of enchantment! fair Venetian city!
That rising from the still depths of the sea,
As if called up by magic, seems to float
Like a gemmed diadem upon the front
Of the proud Adriatic. 'Tis not now
As in the time of old with thy bright name;
Yet thou art beautiful, though desolate!
Though thy rich spoils Hebrew and Hun divide,

And the rough German's gutt'ral tone is heard
Sending rude echoes o'er thy smooth canals,
Where once soft music floated.
Still thou'rt fair,
And thy Palladian roofs, thy sunny skies
Reflected in the blue translucent wave,
Thy fairy islands, the bright moon that reigns
Like a crown'd empress o'er thy classic sea,
And the fair spreading chain, snow-capped and wild,
Of high Friulian mountains, fading off
Into ambiguous distance, yet may boast
A magic grace, soft, bright, original
Elsewhere unparallel'd.
'Tis true thy halls
Are desert now, and the untrodden weed
Grows in that haunt of splendid revelry,*
Where the dispers'd of every nation met
To keep the festival of gladness.—Then
Thou wert a nation, and a proud one too;
Now thou 'rt a slave! The foe has taken all,
All! save the gifts great nature gave to thee;
And the sad thought of that which thou hast been,
Which, link'd with many dreams from childhood lov'd
Of jealous Moors, Jews sucking Christian blood,
And wives who died of grief for their lost lords,
Bring pilgrims to thy shrine from the far west
To touch thy relics and lament thy fall!

If we had time, I should like few things better than to see it again, and enjoy once more the swift,

Piazza San Marco.

still, delicious movement of the gondola, the absence of harsh sounds, and the presence (to the ear) of soft ones. But we are going homeward, and talk as we may of all that we have seen and enjoyed, there is still something in the sound of home, which more than makes up for that which we leave behind. Out of our country we must always be foreigners, and that single word destroys many a sweet and gracious illusion. We admire, we regret, but the home feeling, faint perhaps, or fluctuating when we first set out, clings closer to the heart as we go on, and becomes, as the well-known scene of our domestic enjoyments is approached, the fond and paramount desire.

I should cry down the flat country from Milan almost to Sesto, if the great Alpine giants, covered with snow and burnished into bright gold by the sunbeams, had not stood up before us, stretching from east to west, and proudly forbidding all murmurs. As we advanced along the straight road, a colossus wearing its crown of glory as if the world was made for its omnipotence, seemed to bar up the issue. It looked so bright, and pure, and awful, that the idea of entering its deep defiles seemed almost sacrilegious. But this is the Simplon, and praise be to Napoleon who was no respecter of mountains, we can now drive into it, and

out of it, with as much ease as we run down to Epsom races. Something, it is true, is lost to poetry and fancy; an intimacy with mountains (as with other things) weakens their effect on the imagination, and the pale giant that, seen at a mysterious distance, fills the mind with that kind of dread with which it dwells upon the solitary flight of Satan "t'wards Hell's gates," loses its character of grandeur and desolation when approached. The neighbourhood of other giants, almost as gaunt and lofty, changes or effaces its individuality; it becomes a familiar object, and we make no more now of the Simplon, than children do of the vast Atlantic, when they rummage for shells or pebbles on its shores, without knowing a word about its dangers or immensity. Our mountain was, however, not so near us to-day as it appeared; we have still many miles between us, though it seemed as if we could have stretched out our hands and cooled them in its snows.

The good people here are pious, after a fashion of their own. In a village through which we passed, a play-bill was posted up announcing a sacred drama to be performed by marionettes; and a little farther on, inquiring the name of an inn at which we had breakfasted, we were told it was "La casa del buon Jesu;" the sound was profane,

but the name was pronounced seriously, and was, I have no doubt, bestowed in a feeling, which however incomprehensible to us, was reverential in its way. In some countries a cross traced on the door of a dwelling is supposed to be a sufficient protection from all evil things; the idea is natural and confiding. But the unsanctified horse-shoe nailed up beside it, to keep away the fairies, seems a work of supererogation. In this same casa we had walls, and I think ceilings, gay with frescoed loves, or fruit, or flowers, I forget which—perhaps all, agreeably executed and producing a pretty, lively effect; and floors that I am certain had never gone through the process of ablution. How I longed for the fresh-looking stucco (a kind of rough mosaic) common in the Venetian states, on which the foot treads fearlessly. Here, if it were not for the cross sticks which hold the legs of the old lumbering tables together, and serve as foot-stools, I don't know how we should preserve our feet from the foul contact of the indescribable bricks. Yet take it altogether, the inn is not a bad one, and the master says he intends smartening it into something first rate; good news for next year's swallows.

When we last crossed the ferry at Sesto, or rather were preparing to cross it, three English

ladies presented themselves at the door of our carriage, and letting down the step in a flurry of spirits that forbade all preliminaries, entreated us, with every mark of extreme distress, to do something, the meaning of which we could not exactly understand. One implored us with tears in her eyes; another exclaimed "dear Madam!" a third added "for heaven's sake!" in broken accents; while by their terrified gestures they seemed to apprehend some impending danger in which we were all to be involved. At length we discovered through an imbroglio of sighs, sobs, and hysterical ejaculations, that all this mortal agony was caused by the dread of crossing over in the ferry-boat with our horses, three sober Normans, which I suppose they mistook for the fiery-footed steeds of Apollo; for there they stood, conjuring us by all things on earth and above it, to join with them in a private property skiff, and leave the objects of their terror to kick away at their ease. Poor ladies! their fears, though pitiably real, were too unfounded not to be a little ludicrous. We did all that we could to re-assure them, but they were too far gone to listen to reason; and when we were safely landed at the other side, we saw the poor souls huddled together in a cock-boat an inch or two above the water, which, if there was any danger in the business, had it all to itself.

The companions of our passage to-day were, a blind fiddler who threw off an aria or two of Rossini's, accompanying his voice with the music of a cracked kit, that had about as much sound in it as a frying-pan, a party engaged in their characteristic game of mora, and a promising tête-à-tête in a gig, which had been wheeled upon deck with its lading, consisting of a grinning youth, in the declaratory stage of love-making, and a budding ugliness nothing loath to listen. The iron canister, ornamented with the emblematical death's head and cross-bones, was hung up in the most conspicuous place, to receive alms for the dead,—or the boatmen. Souls are probably cleared out of purgatory at a cheap rate, or else the work must go on but slowly; nobody subscribed to-day—that I could see.

CHAPTER V.

ARONA — LAGO MAGGIORE — BAVENO — ISOLA BELLA — ISOLA MADRE — ORTA.

SLEPT at Arona, under the immediate protection of San Carlo Borromeo, who looks down from an adjacent hill, like an ogre snuffing out babies for his evening repast. This morning our young people ran up the steep, hoping to have a walk in his nose, or at least to have crept up his sleeve, but were disappointed. The nose was not accessible, nor, I believe, the sleeve either.

A cardinal, who has, perhaps, been up the hill on the same errand, passes our carriage at this moment, and shows us by his gracious salutation that age has not quenched the spirit of courteousness. Ecclesiastical dignity has in all countries a strong odour of aristocracy, but the "Corinthian capitals" here have a kind of florid condescension —a show of high urbanity—a smooth, political, protecting, yet lofty air, that differs essentially

from the stout, close-knit, theological look of our bench of bishops, who have the church, the king, the constitution, and the supremacy of Handel's music, written in every hair of their eyebrows. Perhaps the grizzled wig does something in one case, and the purple and scarlet in the other. I will not say that dress makes the man, but it often mars or strengthens an impression more than we are aware of.

Guiseppe says, that forty Jesuits are amusing themselves to-day in the Isola Bella. I could not learn from whence they came, or whether they play at the royal game of goose, or at hunt the slipper. A social spirit seems to animate the priesthood in this corner of the world. I have two very benign examples under my eye at this moment, who do not appear to turn away from the joyous greetings of a noisy party just landed from a market-boat, or to deem it unrighteous to join cordially in the gossip of a circle of women sitting under the shade of a natural bower of vines, while the males of their party are loading their mules with its produce.

Perhaps the influence which the Catholic priest possesses over his flock, is as much owing to these habits of kindliness and intimate union, as to the terrors of the ban, or the lure of absolution.

86222

Education, superior knowledge, and a sacred station, preserve the necessary authority on one side, and submission on the other; while the friendly relations which usually subsist between the pastor and his flock, create a strong feeling of personal affection. I recollect once hearing an Irish woman complaining of her parish priest: he was not like the old one, (she said) Heaven rest his soul! who, though the finest of scholars, was not above sitting down in her cabin and taking a draught of buttermilk. The mass did her no good now; it was better (she added vehemently) to have *his* grave in the place, than the living body of the one who had come after him, who did not know the faces of her children, and called her "honest woman," as if her lawful name was not Mrs. O'Leary. On how slight a thread hangs allegiance!

At Arona the Lago Maggiore is silvery and pleasant, but at Baveno it developes all its beauty and magnificence. Rowed across to the Isola Bella, and looked again upon its groves of bay, and wilderness of limes and citrons. Found every thing just as we had left it three years ago; the village shouldering the palace, a rabble of dirty children offering fruit for sale on the steps of the principal entrance, ragged linen hanging out to dry under the windows, and the urbane and

courteous proprietors at dinner; just as they had been when we passed through their apartments on our first visit. The cardinal was there, blessing the feast, but none of the forty scions of Loyola were visible. Submitted to the usual routine of the pictures, which are not famous, and saw again the pebbly chambers of the summer suite standing knee deep in the waters of the lake. Found the centre of the palace still a ruin, and the garden looking as in old Keysler's time, like a pyramid of sweetmeats, or a floating island, arranged after Mrs. Glasse's most approved receipt. The gardener was proud of his exotics, and made us remark the tree that distils the Arabic gum, that from whose berry castor oil is extracted, and many others. Rowed out upon the lake and skimmed over its beauties; it has islands and a snow mountain (the Monte Rosa, I think), and Como has neither, but it has nothing that can be compared with the double view from the Serbelloni terrace. *That* is the view of views! Como is softer and looks more unvisited, more buried in the silent heart of Italy; the Lago Maggiore is still joined to Switzerland by the link of its snow mountains. Yet the change of countries is very visible and decided; it is no longer the village of wide roofs, of green lawns, and spreading walnut-trees, always beautiful, though

sometimes monotonous; the tints are now more russet, the foliage more foreign, the associations more classical; we think less of herdsmen and country girls, and more of Acis or Galatea. The villages, though more town-like and less picturesque than those that run down from their hills to the edge of the Como lake, have the character and effect which always mark, and are produced by, the huddling together of houses in the country in Italy—all dungeon when approached, but decoration at a distance.

Landed at the Isola Madre, carrying with us delightful recollections of our last visit. It is now undergoing the infliction of improvement,—fresh white walls and new gravel walks of a corkscrew tendency, have not beautified it; but it has delicious capabilities, and a thousand times more natural beauty than the Isola Bella. It ought to be kept in order, but left undressed, with something in the place of the old every-day looking house more in keeping with its southern character, and then it would be an island paradise—a little Juan Fernandez—with the world within call for those who might wish to wheel round to it now and then; and if asking could get it, I would humbly beg it of the Count Borromeo, that I might bask there during the long winter months,

dreaming that it was the soft decline of a protracted summer,* and singing Christmas carols in the midst of orange groves, with the aloe and the Indian fig springing up healthfully from every fissure in the rocks where a handful of earth has accidentally settled itself, and Favonius still reigning in gentle permanency, as he used to do in the sunny pastorals of Dodsley's days. At present the good old Count leaves it to be pecked at by gold and silver pheasants, white peacocks, and all kinds of beautiful winged things, who sail about expanding their burnished plumage, and giving to their island solitude the air of an enchanted spot, created by Venus, or Juno, or some other dove or peacock-loving goddess, as a retreat for her feathered favourites.

There is certainly something highly poetical in the character and colouring of the Borromean islands. They are like the fabulous gardens of ancient story, where one still finds *real* groves of living laurel, and bowers of amaranthus and asphodel (or what may pass for such with the help of a little fancy), and where I always (or *almost*) expect to see trees laden with golden fruit, and

* The climate of the Italian lakes seems to differ essentially from that of the north of Italy in general.

guarded by the Hesperides. There are three distinct classes of landscape scenery, as there are of the drama,—the classical, the pastoral,* and the romantic. Switzerland belongs entirely to the last two, Italy to the first and last, but most eminently to all that comes within the domain of memory, or the precincts of heroic and pagan story.

I have read somewhere, that the painter Tempesta was exiled to the Isola Bella after he had murdered his wife. How awful must the calm of heaven, the stillness of this pure lake, the solitude of a (then probably) unpeopled island, have been to his alarmed mind! What an internal hell must the fury of his soul have made, working against the unanswering silence and imperturbable repose of nature! It is not a great stretch of fancy to think that a strange bad mind, condemned to its own dark brooding, might have in this spot found ali-

* I use the word pastoral merely as connected with scenery; Italy is in reality eminently pastoral, but the word as applied in a wide general sense, conveys an idea distinctly different from that which is attached to it in its more confined or poetical bearing. The vast farms of the Maremma, and armed Tartars of the Italian steppes, are never seen by ordinary travellers; and the soft images associated with the word pastoral, as we are accustomed to use it, are rarely awakened by the familiar scenery of Italy.

ment in dwelling on those foul butcheries which have polluted his pencil. I can imagine a soul charged with crime, breathing freely in the carnage of battle, the uproar of a hurricane, or the convulsions of an earthquake; but here,—alone, and with the immediate eye of heaven upon one!—Some one knocks,—I thought it might be Tempesta come over the water to put my reveries in order, but it is only a waiter bringing in tea. After love, friendships, sentiment, &c., there is nothing that refreshes the spirit and renovates the mind with such swift efficacy as *tea*; it is now becoming a common luxury wherever British travellers are looked out for, at least on the continent of Europe. A few years ago, the melancholy sound of "there is no milk to be had,"—or, "no tea in the house," used to strike upon the heart, as the prohibitions of Doctor Pedro Rezio de Aguero did on the spirits of Sancho Panza; but now this disappointment rarely occurs, and the lovers of bohea and souchong may spread their canvass and sail on fearlessly.

"You must see the lake of Orta," said my brother, and others talked of it as an exquisite, though as yet almost unknown scene. So we hired a light carriage at Baveno, where we slept last night, and after a drive of an hour and a half, and

a walk of a quarter of an hour, found ourselves at Omegna, a little town on the borders of the lake, where we embarked in a rough crazy-looking boat, with a bright sky and a light wind, but an unbecoming one, that turned the white side of the foliage outwards, and would not leave any thing in repose.

Michael Angelo had not far to go for his Fates; every village in Italy affords at least a score of old women spinning with their distaffs, the handkerchief or panno folded round the head mystically, and their dark strong features shrunk into the vacant inquisitiveness of unoccupied old age. A Sybil of this description sat upon the strand at Omegna, plying her thread mechanically while she looked fixedly upon us, as if she held our destiny between her fingers. There was no speculation in the eye, but it was an habitually stern gaze, and followed us whichever way we turned; her dress was shapeless, and at her feet lurked a sort of a cat, the true meerkatzen of Goethe's sorceress, or at least as like it as a cat, that was not actually a witch, could be. Two hundred years ago she would have been made over to the stake and faggot; at present, I suppose, she is looked upon at the worst as a superannuated brownie, or perhaps venerated as one of the *blessed*; rude and super-

stitious natures are often susceptible of a fine feeling of respectful tenderness for the idiot and the aged.

At first we thought the lake a disappointment; but as we glided along its deeply imbayed shores, it opened in a tone of soft and smiling beauty and with a fine aerial colouring,—the true purple light of Italy. The hills are gracefully swept about, (but they are hills, not mountains, at least compared with those of Como and the Lago Maggiore) and the little island gem, the pretty loveable home-looking Santa Giuliana, lies like a halcyon's nest on the bosom of the waters, on which the sun is at this moment raining down showers of light, which as it falls is broken up into stars by the dancing movement of the mimic waves.

Orta basks on the brink of the lake, and becomes it, for there is not enough of mountain magnificence here to make the breath and bustle of life out of place; bustle, however, is not the right word, there is no such thing in an Italian village,—this is a town, yet silent as La Trappe—at least in the day-time, but brightly placed, and less dirty than such things usually are. But for its dirt (a most detaching feature), Italy would be a pearl of a country; nature is so profusely beautiful, and art, or her works, so fine and accessible. Some people

love new countries, and would fain encamp in the Blue Mountains, or see how the bush rangers get on in Van Diemen's land: I cannot agree with them; a country which has once nursed the arts in its bosom, and taught civilization to others, a glorious and pre-eminent country, however it may have fallen into darkness, must still present traces of the past enough to interest the enthusiast or the curious. But a new region has little but its surface, and the rude commencements of society, always so repulsive, and sometimes so frightful, in its nakedness.

But we were at Orta, and just landing on the Piazza, to which twelve fine trees give a sort of consequence; a squad of bright-eyed, ragged urchins lay broiling under a hot wall; we took one of them as our cicerone, and ascended to the Monte Sacro. Twenty chapels of various architecture, dedicated to St. Francis d'Assisi, are scattered over a verdant, shady, beautiful hill, with meditation, and I think music, in its peaceful freshness. Groupes in terra cotta, describing the early life, conversion, miracles, and death of the holy man, fill up the chapels; and the walls are covered with frescoes allusive to the same subject: some are irreparably injured and others nearly effaced by the effects of damp, but many are still

full of interest. Good grouping,—movement, vigour, and expression,—and some delicious angels.

I am afraid the saint began by being a rake, (I don't quite remember the legend), but he grew good and worked miracles afterwards; we have him here sleeping on thorns, which are suddenly turned into roses by the holy contact,—indeed we saw the identical parterre at the Madonna degli Angeli,* and very fresh and flourishing it was, as if it had sprung up but yesterday. But this is a mere nothing, compared to the fiery chariot in which the saint descends like Medea, on I forget what errand, or the skill with which he drives out demons, winged ones a foot or more long, that stick out of the mouth of the possessed like the antlers of a stag. Is there an absurdity which superstition will not swallow?—I fear not; but it is vexing to see such abominations mingling their bad taste, and worse feeling, with the bright creations of a better fancy. A celebrated sculptor of Milan, who was our fellow passenger in the Como steam-boat, spoke of the frescoes as full of power and beauty; from what he said, I had supposed them in good preservation, but there are sad gaps, and

* A superb church, a league or two from Perugia, and near to the city of Asissi, the birth-place of St. Francis.

the eye is obliged to draw for assistance too largely on the imagination. However, between the frescoes and the scene itself, there is certainly enough to repay a visit. But frescoes apart, Lugano, which travellers often overlook, is incomparably finer than Orta. I have a lofty recollection of the Salvadore, and a charming one of the sail to Porlezza, the long withdrawing mountain perspective and high tone of the scenery.

The unctuous man, who calls himself an Eremita and who acted as our guide, dropped on his knees when he came to the chapel in which St. Francis is represented as receiving the precious marks of our Saviour's crucifixion, and, mumbling a long prayer, seemed fast settling into a state of pious abstraction. When hearing us make a movement to depart, he started up, shook himself out of his holy trance, and gathering up at once, and with an adroitness that was quite beautiful, the broken thread of ciceroni-ism, plunged with the true professional drawl into the mysteries of the legend, and listened to the rewarding clink when the last door closed, with an interest as intense as if the voice of the blessed St. Francis himself had tingled in his ears.

We had scarcely left shore on our return, when a burrasca drove us back again. By the by, this

burrasca is no joke; it blustered fiercely in our teeth, and when our rowers tugged against it, knocked us first on one side and then on the other; threw up showers of spray, and piped like an angry Polyphemus; while the boat creaked and the men swore, and a seafaring-looking person, with the air of a smuggler retired from business, who surveyed us from his garden steps, counselled us to return. So we ate trout at Orta, and drank white Asti, at twenty-five sous the bottle, which might have passed for excellent Champagne, even at Paris.

Returned after dinner to Omegna, our boatmen tipsy and vociferous, fearfully so, I thought; but the lake was fortunately calm, and we arrived at Baveno, at eight o'clock, driving in the dark through an air as soft and balmy as the temperature of June is with us. The excursion occupies altogether about ten hours (not counting the time thrown away at the inn), and if days are not very precious, may fill up one agreeably. But I think a person whose catalogue of sights was lengthy and whose time was limited, might, in the midst of so many accessible beauties, grumble a little at being sent out of his beat to Orta.

CHAPTER VI.

DUOMO D'OSSOLA—THE SIMPLON—BRIEG—CANTON DE VALAIS—SION—MARTIGNY—BEX—VEVAY.

OCTOBER the 11th :—and we are now at breakfast in one of the little saloons of the inn at Baveno, at five o'clock (scarcely day-break) with all our windows open. While we hasten the preparations of departure, the sun sends out its bright precursors. First, light streaks of a wild red, spreading far and wide; then the less volatile masses, touched or imbued with rich ethereal purple, or with the bright and living gold of heaven; and last of all, the flood of light, kindling and spreading its gorgeous fret work over the whole firmament, except where a pale green streak divides it from the waters, or where the vapours of night are still seen slowly fading away under the influence of light and heat.

Duomo d'Ossola, which describes in the guide-books like an eastern bazaar, an atmosphere of

coffee and spices, a leaf extracted from the thousand and one, is in reality a small and very Italian town, with abundance of grapes exposed for sale, and dirty women weighing them out; shops full of beads, bodkins, rosaries, macaroni, and garlick, and streets with the usual allowance of arcades, priests, mules, and idlers.

There is so much that is kind and good, and fine and feeling in the Italian character, even in its degradation, that all who have visited Italy must quit it with good wishes, and sincere regret that a people cradled in the strong hold of antique virtue and nurtured by glorious recollections, should submit to die the ignominious death of gradual extinction, leaving their fair country to the rude sway of foreign dominators, and its immortal beauty to the profanation of foreign spoilers. Already may the prophecy of Isaiah be applied in its almost literal sense to Venice, and some other of the Italian states: "And the wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces." But the sentiment which incites a Venetian to quit his splendid home and retire to some obscure spot, rather than linger there an eye-witness to the degradation of his country, may kindle from resentment into action; and this antique Italy,

long the country of memory, may become also that of hope.

When we got upon the heights where the eye first catches (on descending the Simplon) the opening landscape of Italy, we turned round to look upon it, and were confirmed in our previous opinion as to the superior beauty of the descent upon Chiavenna. Nor is there any point of the Simplon that approaches in power and sublimity the Via Mala. But as a whole, the Simplon is perhaps finer than the Splughen; many parts of the latter are cold and tame, and the continual twisting of the road in short monotonous zig-zags becomes at last harassing to both mind and eye, and gives, by the force of comparison, a very striking effect to the bold sweeping route we passed over this morning.

As a monument, too, of the triumph of man over the opposition of nature, the Simplon has something more impressively magnificent about it. The mine has been sprung in its fastnesses, and has shattered its bulwarks of granite. Man, with his train of luxurious accessories, enters into its deep recesses, and finds them smoothed and levelled for his accommodation. An impression of prodigious difficulty overcome by prodigious power, fastens on the mind, filling it with a mixed

sentiment of awe and wonder. Thought and imagination are stirred up by this memorial of a mighty *will* subduing a mighty nature; the mind is under strong excitement, and in that word lies, I fear, (for it is not for our happiness that it should do so) half the magic of life.*

To have created the excellent road by which the Splughen is now traversed, much skill and labour must have been expended, but the mind is not astonished by any daring or gigantic exertion of man's power. Nature has it all in all; there she sits, spreading her undivided mantle over

* Many months after the above was printed, being at Lucerne, a small volume entitled "Promenade au delà des Alpes" fell into my hands. I opened it because its author's name was Meister, and I fancied that it came from the same delightful pen to which we owe "Le Lépreux de la Cité d'Aoste,"—and other charming things. I had never heard of another Meister, or read a word of his writing. To my great astonishment, I found some remarks on the Simplon expressed in words so like my own, that I was tempted to tear out my leaf; but I was laughed at, and so I have left it. I shall transcribe the passage as far as the likeness holds:—"Quelle superbe lutte du pouvoir de l'industrie humaine, de l'énergie d'une volonté ferme contre des obstacles qui sembloient tout-à-fait invincibles. Où trouver une image plus vive et plus imposante des triomphes de l'ordre sur les plus grands efforts de l'anarchie?"

those thrilling solitudes, those sylvan depths, that world of unimaginable form and colouring. I speak only of the spots which she has distinctly favoured; the rest (as I have remarked before) is tedious, and common-place. However, what may have appeared so to us, might not strike another in the same way. I recollect when we were on our way to visit Italy for the first time, meeting a young gentleman who had just returned from thence over the Splughen. L—— made the usual inquiries about the safety of the road, the character of the scenery, &c. But we could not get our traveller out of the almond blossoms, "such a shower of bright pink!—such a flowery luxuriance!—so fresh!—so beautiful!" He did not want for fancy, but unfortunately he had crossed the mountain in the season of the blossoms, and his mind ran too much upon fresh delights, to leave room for a thought of nature in her antique citadels. This was literally seeing things *en couleur de rose*; but if it be true that Lord Byron, as he stood for the first time before the Parthenon, said "This is fine, but not so good as the Mansion-house," our young traveller may well be forgiven his almond blossoms.

We did not reach the village of Simplon till two hours after night-fall. Fortunately we were guided

by a bright moon—harvest or hunter's, I know not which;—but its melancholy, beautiful light lay upon the cold snow mountains, and transformed all the uprooted trunks and half prostrate trees into forms which St. Anthony would have called temptations, (we have other notions on that subject now), horns, hoofs and all, famously got up. I think I recognised Mephistopheles, and saw a score or two of saucer eyes glaring through the branches; but I am sure of a griffin, and an army of long-horned chimeras, with a white woman standing by the side of a torrent, and pointing upwards.

A warm room, an excellent supper, and most comfortable beds,—what more can weary nature desire? The family here are French, but have passed fourteen years on the top of this mountain. I asked one of the girls if she regretted the warm sun of Lyons, or ever thought of its gaieties. She said, "no, never;" and told the secret of her happiness, by adding, that she was always occupied. What with the passing swarms of the summer season, and the mules and muleteers, caravans and pedlars of the winter months, the house, she said, was always full; and when one was very busy within doors, it mattered not whether the sun shone or the snow fell.

There is, in a French temperament, a provision of philosophy ready for all contingencies; no people on earth squeeze so much out of life as the French; if good comes in their way, they make the most of it; if it be withdrawn, they do not waste life in repining, or reject, on that account, the fainter sources of enjoyment which may yet be open to them: the ortolan of to-day never spoils the appetite for the omelet of to-morrow.

October 13th.—The great gate of the Simplon is evidently on the eve of closing; travellers of all descriptions multiply; vetturini jog along tediously. Couriers with the air of importance that forms their point of honour, fly by, hastening to secure a monopoly of comfort for the patrician travellers who follow on the heels of their booted messengers. Sometimes it is a spacious travelling coach, thickly peopled, six originally, but advantage taken of the fine day to push the youngest boy out upon the box, that he may take a lesson in French or Italian from the valet who occupies part of it; the ancients fast asleep in the corners, the younger branches veiled and meditative; with an intelligent face sometimes popped out of a side window, shooting inquisitive glances into the earth, the rocks, the weeds of Italy, which Lord Byron has told her are so very beautiful. At the next shifting of the

scene, it is a two-place vehicle, and a young tête-à-tête with honey-moon written in their eyes, straight from St. George's, Hanover Square, and bound to Venice, Florence, or perhaps Rome,—the piled imperials loftily denoting the yet undiminished state of the bridal paraphernalia. Waiting-maids hoisted up before, or clinging behind, grumbling, if old, at the curtainless beds, stone floors, insects, and bad tea; and if young, angling for the attentions of the hussar cap and embroidered jacket of the Lothario of the Abigails—the whiskered courier;—who, having journeyed from Vienna to Moscow, and from Paris to Palermo, perhaps to Athens, a leading man amongst princes and ambassadors, condescends to take the family under his protection, graciously allowing the squire to pay him just double the amount of his own private stipulation with the innkeeper, talks *vertu* to the Lady Babs and Lady Charlottes,* directs their opinions on the merits of a Guido or a Guercino, and discusses in their soft society the flavour of a sparrow, to which he swears as a genuine beccafico.

Hyde Park, on a spring Sunday, is scarcely gayer than the Simplon to-day,—and such a day! —our almanack says it is the 12th of October, but

* Vide "High Life Below Stairs."

the sky laughs, and writes July in sunbeams on its broad blue surface. A general turn-out from all the carriages; men, women, and children all toiling up the mountains on foot, and leaving the trundling diligence, and the lighter turn-out from Long Acre, to drawl along after them. It is altogether a delightful scene, full of life, and probably of hope in those pressing anxiously forward,—and perhaps with something not unlike disappointment in such as, having realized their dreams, are returning homewards, exaggerating, even to themselves, their feelings of delight, or their enforced privations.

We are fast exchanging the festooning vines, the chestnuts, the arcades, and dungeon-like dwellings of Italy, for the orchards, meadows, and cottages with glazed windows, of the canton du Valais. I thought them poor huts, when I first passed this way coming from the canton of Berne, that land of milk and honey; but now we cry out "how comfortable!" in the same feeling with which the man, who turned his cravat after a week's wear, exclaimed, "how refreshing is clean linen!"

And yet, notwithstanding this impress of superior comfort, my fancy still lingers on the melancholy sweetness, the veiled beauty of Italian landscape;

there is so much speech in its stillness, so much philosophy in its picture: its ruins are the records of man and his destiny, of strength, ambition, glory, and oblivion. The solitary shepherd leads his flock into the campagna, and reposes amidst the marble fragments scattered over it,—the wreck, perhaps, of some temple erected to commemorate a triumph, whose eminent occasion lies buried in the depths of ages; he gathers wild honey in the fissures of a column raised to the immortal glory of,—we know not who—some one great or powerful,—who earned or bought the honour of what was called undying fame, but whose name has passed away like the breeze of the desert—leaving no track behind. Such things as these give a mental colouring, a moral interest to the landscape, which few others possess in the same degree. There is something too in the climate of southern Italy, that disposes the mind to meditation; something eternal in a vegetation that knows neither spring nor winter (at least in their more obvious or rigorous forms), which recalls the recollection of the past, and fills the soul with tender melancholy.

The women at Brieg stride about the fields in little black hats and long black gowns, looking at a distance like priests in their canonicals.

They are ugly, pale, and stupid-looking, with throats frightfully distended, — not all ugly, however, for I recollect one, a very pretty savage, piloting us some three or four years ago to a waterfall in a village near to Brieg, (Naters, I think) and when we offered her money, springing off like a wild cat. We had some trouble, I remember, to bring her back again, and when we forced a franc into her half-closed hand, she turned it round and round as if it was a keepsake, and perhaps wears it now about her neck, sewn up in a bag by way of an amulet. It was the only instance of a positive ignorance of money and its uses, that I have ever met with.

When that illustrious visionary, Jean Jacques, got hold of an idea, how he hugged and fondled it, and dressed it up in colours snatched from that palette which now lies buried, with all its dewy freshness, in his tomb. No one since has found it; other writers use live tints, and bright ones too,—but his touch was magical. The poor Valaisannes on whom he lavished his delicious colouring, are wretched realities, and may take rank amongst the least dangerous of the fair sex. One comes amongst them, seeking under every little hat for the charming face; and peering at every tinselled jacket for the light shape, which

St. Preux, even while the fair form of the impassioned Julia floated before his mind's eye, found so perplexingly lovely, and a squalid half-awake race, disfigured by goîtres which they show off as our women do white teeth or ivory fingers, presents itself. I should think the most fire-and-tow *garde-du-corps* in the service of his majesty Charles Dix, might dine in perfect tranquillity of heart, though waited upon by a legion of such damsels as the leaden-eyed she, who is at this moment laying a log of wood upon the fire. I asked her to bring me the travellers' book, and she stared as if I had inquired when the next ship sailed for Calcutta. I remember the slatternly mistress of the dirty inn at Sion telling me that the peasants in that quarter were so nasty, (and she, I should think, was no epicure), that she was obliged to send into her own country (the Pays de Vaud) for servants, adding something about faces washed once a-year, and other stomach-stirring vouchers for her veracity.

After all, the Valais is very monotonous, I should say exceedingly tiresome, if that same Jean Jacques did not stand up before me, frightening away my opinion with a threatening gesture. But the mountains have certainly a very wall-like shut-up run sometimes, and the heart of the valley a

bleak, swampy, desolated look; too many cold marshy stretches full of pollard willows and dwarf birch, and too many indications of the naughty freaks of a wild winter river. Here and there a striking picture hangs itself out, as the Monte Rosa, cold and dazzling, leaning against the blue heavens, and shutting up the gorge of Vispach; yet not leaning, for the word implies weakness, but standing out from the firm dome in magnificent independence; and the castles clustered about Sion, filling up the valley with their pictorial effect, and the mind with their old recollections.

As every place has now its Baden, the Valais of course must have one too; and those who have ventured into the gorge of the Dala, praise the baths of Louesche, where gentlemen and ladies, fastidiously flanneled from head to foot, swim about together all day long, with their heads above water like the buffaloes in the Pontine Marshes, and little tables before them on which are placed their chocolate, newspaper, bouquet, &c.

Slept at Tourtmain; too late last night, and too early this morning for the cascade. A fine flashing fall, if I recollect right, with meagre accompaniments. Breakfasted at Sion,—the pretty mistress grown into an ugly one, or nearly so. Thought of buds and butterflies, and all kind of

ephemeral, evanescent things. Some people harden in ugliness, as others do in iniquity, as —— used to say.

Nothing to be done at Sion; so having noted down that the lemon, the orange, the Indian fig, &c., ripen here, forgetting that they are in a Swiss valley, looked out of the window, and saw two young women meet and kiss each other over and over again, and always with a lingering press of hands as if the hearts were in them—perhaps they were, perhaps not. One was much prettier than the other, an inequality sorely against a communion of souls. I wish I were now as devout as I was five-and-twenty years ago on the subject of friendship; I was then a sincere, an enthusiastic believer;—the recollection is still dear to me. But the beautiful drapery in which imagination had enveloped her shadows, was soon torn away by the rude realities of life. Yet I still remember—who can ever forget them?—those delicious day-dreams, those illusions of a confiding nature, to which the heart clings so fondly, so tenaciously; and I still believe in the kind offices of friendship, though I have lost much of my faith in its sincerity. Many a one will do not only an amiable, but a disinterested act by a friend, whose weak points they do not hesitate to lay open; and when

ridicule has gone its length, quiet their consciences by drawing in with the salvo of "she is an excellent creature after all, and I love her very sincerely."

"Dieu me garde de mes amis!—Quant à mes ennemis, je m'en charge,"—was said in a wise, though bitter spirit. Yet there are no doubt some few susceptible of this fine sentiment in all its purity; indeed I know there are. But the word friendship is too often profaned by its application to vague, unsettled, or entirely worldly feeling; and the sentiment itself is not, I believe, often found in its strength, out of the close domestic circle, where all good feelings take root and flourish, where it is bound up with all the virtues and all the weaknesses of our natures, with love, tenderness, pride, and even with our selfishness and vanity.

As we quitted Sion, I saw the girls still standing in a corner, their eyes growing into each other's, and their hands joined, as if they defied the powers of envy, jealousy, or distrust, to rend "their ancient love asunder." A cradle friendship probably,—ah! faith is given to the young, and doubt is inflicted on those who advance in life. But I talk of friendship only in the general acceptation of the word; of the closer and dearer ties

of intimate kindred, the fire-side ties, who can speak from a more felicitous experience than myself?—no one on earth, I believe; I say it in deep thankfulness of spirit, and with the devout and earnest hope of its faithful and prolonged endurance.

What a throng of images and emotions, of throbbing hopes and tremulous uncertainty, follows this last idea;—one must not dwell on it. The inn (La Tour) is very good; abundant accommodation, clean beds, and no buzzers. I wrapped up my head, expecting to hear the twang of the horrible horn, but all was silent. We are too late, I believe, for those venomous little monsters. Martigny is infamous for them in the hot months.

Strolled out while tea was preparing, and followed a crowd of people, who, as well as we could understand, were returning from a sermon. A very plain congregation, but all bowing and smiling, and looking good humoured. Turned up a narrow path-way, and fell in love with a large single tree, spreading itself out upon the gray horizon, and shading a wooden cross that had the moss of many winters on it. I am fond of these rude memorials, when time has mellowed down their every-day features and given them a touch of rusty dignity. A solitary tree throwing out

its bold ramifications on the calm bosom of the heavens, is one of the grandest and most beautiful objects in nature. And when it shades a wooden cross, a holy well, or a rude altar overhung with wild weeds, it is to me like a chapter in the New Testament; and I feel that I would not willingly part with one of these simple memorials of pious feeling, even with all that wise ones call its sins of superstition upon it, for much finer things. I love the way-side shrine; and when I see the tired female lay down her load and kneel before it, with the absorbed expression of one who seeks a surer friend than the false ones of this world, I always feel a touch of kindly sympathy,—piety so becomes a woman—it is her true staff and armour.

Found Saint Maurice in good tone, and Bex as comfortable as ever. Regretted that we could not give a morning to the chestnut grove on the hill behind the inn, that beautiful spot, which I well remember wishing to possess, that I might sit down in summer under the sweeping foliage, with a blue gleam of the Leman lake in the distance, and a mountain world round me. But "forward" must be our motto; so on we jog, through Aigle and Villeneuve, both insignificant, though one is built, like some famous or fabulous Arabian city of which I have read, entirely of black marble.

Passing the little island, with its air of a floating tomb, but such as it is, the only one of which the lake of Geneva can boast; and the poet's Chillon, looking very like that awful frontier decoration, a douane; and Clarens and Montreux, the one raw and the other lovely, we journeyed on to Vevay, where we now are, enjoying the Swiss comforts of clean floors and female attendance; comforts on which one sometimes casts a backward glance, even in the midst of all the allurements of Italy.

There are too many vines about Vevay, and too many stone walls; but the little bays are beautiful, and the walnut-trees, and the pebbly strand. We ran down to the chestnut walk on the edge of the lake, but the mountains were in the dumps, and pulled the clouds over their noses, and would not let us have even a peep at their high mightinesses. The lake was less coquettish; it looked still and shining, darkly shining, and showed off its depth and purity, as if in opposition to its sulky neighbours. What a pity that this walk, looking as it does on such a beautiful world, should be made a drying-ground for washer-women, who hang their lines between the trees, and while their dripping sheets and patched petticoats flap in the eyes and shut out the rocks of Meillerie and the mountains of Savoy, vulgarize the scene out of half its poetry by

their incessant clamour, as they kneel in their tubs, beating their linen upon a smooth stone with a flat wooden instrument, and trying to out-talk its everlasting bang. We had neither time nor sunshine for the churchyard view, which calls for both; it is a scene to linger on long and delightedly, but I recollect thinking the spread of water finer from the strand.—N. B. Excellent *milk* at Vevay, and *women* as they are elsewhere. Rousseau praises both; his skill "dans les laitages" was unquestionable, but La Thérèse, and her influence over his mind, makes his taste in woman rather problematical.

"La route vaut bien les souvenirs," said Mons. de Rocca very unsentimentally,—his moon-beam figure and the scene considered. When a man looks like a hero of romance, one does not expect to hear him talk of the rocks of Meillerie *en sapeur*. But it was at least unaffected, and when a scene calls forth cant, continence is such a virtue!

From Vevay to Lausanne we have neither "route" nor "souvenir," for I believe there is no positive evidence of the present path (by courtesy called a road) having been ever traversed by the too susceptible Julie, or her too complaisant friend, or yet by that marvel amongst lovers, St. Preux. No such thing as fancying that we tread in the actual

footsteps of that philosophical, rhapsodical, unnatural, and most eloquent trio, who discussed virtue as a problem, and found that its solution was vice. A public road not wider than a lane at Genoa, so narrow indeed that in many places two carriages meeting cannot possibly pass, and this unredeemed by any association. Nothing can be more annoying. A-propos to associations; I sincerely wish that there was an act of parliament to compel persons, calling themselves artists and wishing to illustrate popular works, to qualify previously. I was looking about this morning for the identical spot from which the tender Julie threw herself, in an agony of maternal love, into the fatal lake, when all on a sudden she rushed by me, and in a moment after, I saw her floating in double ruffles and a wadded petticoat, just as she appears in those atrocious perpetrations usually bound up with the last pages of her story. It was in vain to think of that charming blonde, that "physionomie douce, tendre, modeste, enchanteresse," to which Rousseau has lent all the touching graces of his enchanting pencil; the lady who plunged in before my eyes might have been Madame la Présidente or Madame la Maréchale, but certainly was not Madame de Wolmar. The illusion was destroyed; it was in vain that I put my hand before

my eyes, and tried to shut out the flounces and falbelas;—it would not do, and Julie still comes to me as a beauty of the Pompadour school, who had heard bons mots strung together at her toilette and lived in an atmosphere of milliners.

But to return to the road; we came full tilt against a cart in the narrowest part of it, and were obliged to have our horses taken off and the carriage backed a considerable way, to get to a little opening where two vehicles might pass (if skilfully steered) without an inevitable crash of wheels. A rencontre of this kind at night might be attended by very disagreeable consequences. Lausanne and Vevay are both over head and ears in the dirty bustle of the vintage, and the streets choked up with vats and barrels, like the mighty Thames Street itself. What an uninviting process!—but the grapes here are exquisite, and the wine highly prized. We tried that called la Vand, a much esteemed kind, but did not like it; the Neufchatel wine (and this I have recently been assured is not made at Neufchatel in Switzerland, but at *a* Neufchatel in France) is the only exception, that I know of, to the general bad quality of Swiss wines. They have, usually, a sort of sour sweet flavour, like an infusion sweetened by some tender-hearted apothecary to humbug a cross child.

CHAPTER VII.

LAUSANNE — ORBE — THE JURA — BESANÇON — MONTBAR — ROUTE TO PARIS — APPROACH TO PARIS.

A WEEK at Lausanne has made us in love with its romantic site and sweet vicinity, preferable, I think, to that of Geneva. There, the hills that dabble in the water, and look into it as if they were admiring their own smiling beauty in its pure mirror, are gay, decorated, and brilliant; but there is something more ideal in the lonely mountains that darken round the head of the lake. It is true, the good things about Geneva are more accessible; the roads are (if I recollect right) excellent, and the ascents gentle, while here every thing is up-hill work, which, whatever goats, and kids, and other skittish things may think, is a sore drawback. But for country places, I know of no spot out of England and its dependencies, which can cope with the neighbourhood of Lausanne.

There are delicious things here; Vernens, for instance, where we wandered about delighted, and could have fancied ourselves in England, if in the midst of its park scenery the Alps and the lake had not handed in their Swiss credentials through every convenient opening. Yet fine as all this is, I think the mountains and the deep gorge at the head of the lake are finer from Vevay. At this advancing season, the colouring and atmosphere are rich and melancholy. It is neither bleak nor wet; the sun shines, and the lake is motionless, but the yellow leaves lie on the ground, and the evening mists gather early on the mountains. Every thing is still; the streets, the public walks, the inns all look deserted. I believe we are the only strangers (I mean passing ones) here, and to-morrow we too shall be off. In the mean time we stroll about this dirty little town and the beautiful walks that hang upon it, or look from our windows on the lake, the gliding sail, and the gray rocks of the enchanter, which after all make but a poor figure in the distance.

There are certain lights and certain aspects of nature, that have a strong, habitual power over my mind. Often a kind of colouring in the air at the decline of an autumnal day, when the weather is dry and soft, brings with it a long train of home

thoughts and early recollections; and I sit thinking of a thousand gone-by things, till darkness comes and blots out all my fancies. It is coming now, and the shadows of the opposite mountains fall upon the lake and seem to narrow it to the dimensions of a slender river. The sky changes, slight gusts of wind come at intervals, stirring the red leaves, and shaking off the large rain-drops that have lain since the shower of yesterday cupped in their hollows. One single vessel stretches across the bay, and one lonely bird sails slowly after it, spreading its wide wings, and hovering over the little bark as if it guarded something that was dear to it.

In such scenes and moments, the soul soars upwards and communes with all that it has loved and lost on earth. Can there be a *real* unbeliever? —can there be one who clings stiffly to the earth, and will not be persuaded?—I hope and believe not: of this I am sure, that more is said (even by the most hardened) out of bravado than from conviction, and much more scepticism pretended to by scoffers than is really felt.

The Swiss are an excellent people,—calm, religious, lovers of order, good citizens, worthy of liberty, and strong to maintain it. But they are

neither poets nor painters. A country that might

"Create a soul,
Under the ribs of death,"

seems to act like a wet blanket on the fancy. A man naturally imaginative, but who has always lived in the world, may perhaps be more sensible of the soul-stirring marvels of nature when they suddenly open on him, than one who has grown up in the midst of her familiar and unheeded riches, though he may not prize or love them with such home feelings. But I am surprised that the constant intimacy with scenes and objects of infinite beauty and splendour, does not give an habitual colouring of poetry to the mind. I can comprehend why a man of acute understanding, liberal education, and studious habits, but unaccustomed to society or the intercourse of the world, may fail in the developement of the passions. Man's nature is intricate, and must be studied intensely. He who would lay open the magnificent structure of the human mind, must watch it through the changeful phases of active life, and meditate what he has there marked, in the stillness of solitude, with the door barred upon the world and its distractions. But nature is more communicative than

man; she spreads open her page, and he who will may read its ample characters, and catch light and inspiration from them. But light comes not here, nor inspiration either. Why it does not is a problem, the solution of which I leave to others.

Had I known that circumstances would have detained us so long at Lausanne, I should have squeezed Madame Charrière's charming book * into a side-pocket, that I might have read it here, and enjoyed, on the spot itself, its delightful, and I have no doubt accurate, sketches of that agreeably constructed society, which, with all its provincial drawbacks of monotony, and the want of high excitement, Gibbon preferred to any other.

October 21st.—Left Lausanne looking soft and romantic, in a sober autumnal sun, whose subdued tone became it. There is always something melancholy in a wide spread of water, unless the sunbeams are actually dancing on it. And though a lake, whose limits are defined, has not the same vague, indefinite, and mysterious character which is impressed on the face of those mighty waters that come we know not whence and go we know not where, yet still it has a strong colouring of pensiveness. There are few aspects of nature

* Lettres écrites de Lausanne.

more melancholy than that of a watery waste by moonlight.

I once lived within view of a mill-stream that babbled cheerfully through pleasant fields while summer lasted; but when swollen by the winter rains, used to spread its waters over a wide valley, effacing every thing but the dark boundaries. No combination of rock and ruin could produce such a cold, pale, desolate picture, as did those flooded fields when the moon shone on them; and yet it had beauty in it, but of a fearful melancholy cast, like a sweet voice singing of graves and death-beds.

Thought, as the lake receded from us, that I might never see it again; and loving it dearly for the sake of two sweet months I once passed on its banks, grew sentimental, and found myself saying in an inward voice, "Je ne reverrai plus (here I slid in a peut-être) ces beaux paysages, ces forêts, ces lacs, ces bosquets, ces rochers, ces montagnes, dont l'aspect a toujours touché mon cœur."* But I soon forgot my reveries in the enjoyment of a bright day, and a finely varied country. Slept at Orbe, of historical memory, and still imposing from its castellated air, its ruins, bridge, and domineering position. We had left it at some dis-

* Rousseau.

tance behind us, when a turn of the road brought us round again to the town, and saved us by a little circuit from the steep ascent of the streets, all but perpendicular, I suppose, for the sharp apprenticeship of the Lausanne acclivities must harden the hearts of the post-boys against trifles.

22d.—A downright London fog, nothing visible but the gossamer web hung over the bushes and a few trees close to the road, till we were on the confines of France; when after ten minutes' drawn battle between mist and sun, the latter conquered, and with one warm breath swept away the whole drapery of fine-drawn cobweb, dew drops and all, letting us know what before we were scarcely aware of, that we were in the heart of the Jura, in the midst of pine forests, cattle, and habitation, and not far from the redoubtable Douane, that lords it from the top of a mountain, giving itself the airs of a fortress, and striking terror into the hearts of the wandering contrabandists.

To my great surprise, I found myself (very innocently) one of this class, and saw my vases of Bohemian glass, which I had brought from Italy, thinking that for a slight duty I might pass such insignificant things, clawed manfully by the searcher in chief, who to all my eloquent remonstrances, and humble settings forth of their worth-

lessness and my own particular affection for them, answered with a hopeless shrug, and a decisive "Madame, c'est prohibé." So I was forced to resign my green leaves veined with gold on an opaque ground, to the mercy of the flinty-hearted authorities.

The Jura looks tame after the power and glory we have left behind; yet the fine autumnal colouring of the woods, the black pines like the deep base in a chorus, the rich red leaf of the beech, and all the intermediate tints of dark orange, brighter yellow, and pale transparent green, have a melancholy beauty that belongs to the poetry of landscape. The cottages here have still much of the Swiss character. The huge slanting roof projecting far beyond the walls, and taking not only the house, but all the supplementaries, under its protection, built round with the winter provision of fuel, and thatched over doors and windows with the brushwood and brambles destined to feed the social fire, is as Swiss, as if the Oberlands were still within kiss-hand distance.

I wish they had been, instead of the Douane that bristled up at the foot of the Jura, long after we had imagined ourselves done with all official interference. It was in vain to tell the craving

myrmidons that we had been scrupulously examined at Jougne; they unpacked us all, saying it was their business to inspect the inside of the carriage. They performed their duty scrupulously, detaining us nearly three quarters of an hour, and most inconveniently, as day was declining, and we had a considerable way to go before we could reach a place to sleep at.

As I take no particular delight in the jargon of custom-house people, even when they are civilly disposed, and am apt to feel indignant when they affect to carry things with a very high hand, I strolled on with some other idlers of our party, and amused myself in looking at the coming in of the cows from the distant pasturages, all filing homewards in orderly array, each herd under the guidance of a little boy, whose cheerful whistle came merrily over the fields. There was no local beauty, no verdure, no fertility, nothing but an expanse of champaign country, with low hills round it, and villages scattered about, reddening in a rich sunset; but the whole picture was so full of simple country images, so fresh and rustic, that I have often looked at show things with much less pleasure than I felt while I stood in the midst of the cows, listening to the courteous gossip of an old woman, who came out of a neighbouring cot-

tage to wish us a "bon voyage," and ask us a few questions,—a ceremony never omitted in France, where curiosity is often as obtrusive as Franklin describes it to be in America, but with a little show of civility, or seeming interest, mixed up with it, that makes it less offensive.

The delays of office detained us so long, that we were benighted. Met with an uncouth reception at Ornans, where we however found good beds, the certain luxury of a French inn. This morning a woman of a very villanous aspect added a flagrant codicil for something, I forget what, to the bill, but the master came in and rescued us from her fangs. Business women are always more tricking than men.

This is an unprepossessing part of France, neither the people nor the country put forth agreeably. The first is dull, and the last unconciliating.

Benighted again,—and obliged to put up at the Rising Sun, a cabaret of threatening exterior, mud up to the threshold—and within, tobacco *versus* onions. A dozen carters puffing away in one corner, and the eternal "marmite" sending out its savoury fumes from another; and above stairs, dirty floors, patched windows, excellent beds, and coffee, cream, bread, and preserved fruits, fit for

the gods. The landlord, a genteelish looking person, lounges at the door, looking "as little married as possible," while the wife is here and there and every-where in a moment. She is a first-rate specimen of a clever French woman of all work (generally the prominent feature in a *tiers-état ménage*); active, dignified, and loquacious, not unmindful of her sex's claims, or her own; but attentive and urbane, though evidently primed for explosion on the slightest approach to those airs of domination so frequently assumed by our travelling Milors and Miladies.

Had heard too much of the valley of the Doube, and so thought perhaps too little of it. It opens well, with a fine bend of the river; but it is neither like the gorge of Narni, or the best part of the Appennines, as we had been told,—indeed in no respect does it resemble either. It is bold, but stony, with too many meagre vineyards, and a general poverty of colouring, altogether not worth going out of one's way to see as we did, at least with the Oberlands, and the Splughen, and the gulf of Genoa dancing before one's eyes.

At Besançon, a handsome and populous looking town, we had some trouble about our passport; L—— remonstrated against the delay,—the soldier

on duty put on a look of importance, and gravely exclaimed "Vous concevez bien, Monsieur, que cette place est extrêmement forte." L—— tried to convince him of the improbability of a man's coming with his wife and children to storm, or even sap a town. But he preserved his pomp of apprehension inviolate, and assured us, (as he graciously allowed us to pass), that our getting off so easily was "un effet de la bonté de Madame,"—a lady who condescended to double the police officer (her husband, I suppose), in his hours of indulgence.

Great improvement in the inns; already reminiscences of Paris are awakened. Mirrors, draperies, and Utrecht velvet become common elegancies, though stairs and floors, as dirty as those of a guard-room, discredit them sometimes; but in general we found ourselves most comfortably housed. Dijon (*La Cloche*) is very good, Tonnerre not bad, and Sens excellent. So are many others, but such a raw dreary country! The Val Suzon,* the position of Montbard, and perhaps of Tonnerre, are the only passable things. Ap-

* Perhaps this is unjust; the Val Suzon merits much higher praise, but a raw, colourless October evening, had chilled its beauties.

proaching Dijon, we stared out of the carriage to catch a glimpse of what the guide-book calls Genlis. Is this the Genlis which Madame la Comtesse denominates "une des plus belles terres du royaume?" We could see nothing but a cold flat, wanting all her animal spirits to throw a ray of cheerfulness upon it. Stopped at Montbard, and visited Buffon's garden. It is attached to the house in which a great part of his life was passed, and which is still inhabited by the widow of his son. It rises on terraces shaded by large trees, and looking over an agreeable country, but not an inspiring one.

It is impossible to visit the scenes which have fed the musings of a remarkable mind, been shaped by the taste, or trodden by the frequent footsteps of one, whose name is written in the enduring records of genius or of virtue, without a certain degree of interest, stronger or weaker in proportion as the talents or opinions of the person are consonant to, or at variance with, our tastes and feelings. Sometimes a line, a reflection, an anecdote, marks out a spot, and increases the interest with which we visit it. Who ever entered the pavilion which terminates the terrace of Gibbon's residence at Lausanne, without recollecting the fine and feeling passage with which

he closed, on that spot, his gorgeous work? or rambled amidst the chestnut trees of Montmorency without thinking of Jean Jacques, or perhaps seeing him, hiding himself in the woods with his roll of gilt paper, fastened with "la nonpareille bleue," in his bosom?

But all this has nothing to do with the dull route to Paris. We took the Melun road, and so lost Fontainebleau,—all that it has of redeeming. A fair inn at Melun,—perfect cleanliness, and wood that burns without sputtering.

I love good fires quite as well as Mr. de Coulanges did.* When he talks of the magnificence, the princely luxury of the Hôtel de Chaulnes,* he does not waste words on mirrors or velvet, on vases of Japan or Gobelin tapestry, but rushes at once upon the "bon air des feux qui sont dans toutes les cheminées." He was right; nothing illuminates or beautifies an apartment, like the animating blaze of a fire. As I poke my feet close to the blazing wood and look around me, I admire, as I have often done before, the polished neatness of a bedchamber in a well-regulated French inn. The smart mirror over the chimney, reflecting a pendule of alabaster or gilt bronze, and two

* Lettres de Madame de Sevigné.

porcelain vases filled with artificial flowers and protected by glass shades; a pretty light paper covering the walls, and sometimes the additional ornament of a few loyal prints, or half a dozen English engravings, or perhaps two or three very vile crayon portraits of the host and family. But often the paper is itself the picture; a royal hunt continued round the room, or scenes in Mexico or the bay of Naples, or forest landscapes, producing a lively, pleasing effect. The floors of oak or brick, rubbed into a high polish, and the handsome mahogany articles varnished like a snuff-box, with marble slabs and sometimes ornaments in or moulu; then the small beds always clean and good, with a curtain of some light material flung over an arrow or a spear, or gathered into a crown, or a hoop, or a—something. The carpet too begins to take its place, at least in the centre of the room; it is often a piece of threadbare tapestry, originally manufactured for some more distinguished purpose, but fallen (like other things in the revolution) from its high estate; sometimes a marble console with brackets richly gilt, or a curtain of satin damask or some other tarnished vestige of past splendour, tells the story of the time when the plunder of chateaus was found in the hands of those, who knowing nothing of its value, sold

their unlawful acquisitions for a trifle to the first bidder.

But it is only on the great roads and in the best inns that the materials of my sketch are found. In the inferior ones, and less frequented passes, the floors, the walls, even the recesses in which the beds are placed, are awful! But even there, excellent mattresses, abundance of clean linen, napkins, and silver forks, may be counted upon almost with certainty; while bells or bolts, clean curtains or doors that shut closely, are nearly out of the question.

It is rare to meet a traveller who has not something to say against French inns and French charges. Why do not people make arrangements before taking possession of their apartments? This would prevent the wrangling which often takes place when the bill is presented; there can be nothing shabby attached to the idea of a fair stipulation. But the inferior class of English travellers are in the habit of offering less for every thing than its real value, under the idea that every one intends to cheat them; and the air of superiority with which the sordid bargain is driven, is often more offensive than the suspicion which it indicates. The English are no longer the *vrais Milors* of hosts and post-boys; this is not very material:

but it is material that the reputation of the country should not be injured by the suspicious parsimony and overbearing airs of a certain class of travellers, who come abroad in their defensive armour with a fixed idea that all *foreigners* are rogues, and that they have a right to live on the continent for next to nothing. Treating a French inn-keeper imperiously, is the sure way to stir up all his knavish propensities; but when we borrow a little of the affability with which our continental neighbours smooth the inequalities of life, they are in general a very tractable, and by no means unreasonable class of people.

As we advance, the country becomes more insipid, and the skies more cheerless. Eternal rows of poplar, all stripped and naked, except where a red leaf clings with the tenacity of an eye-tooth to the extreme point of a slender branch, and twirls round and round as the veering winds please to blow it. Autumn is generally a delicious season in France; I have seen autumnal skies here, that have turned the heavy clods of the newly ploughed field, and the plough itself, and the red-breast, poising its light weight and warbling on the bare thorn, into poetry. But now we have a constant gray drizzle, plashy roads, dead leaves lying about

in heaps, kept down by the weight of rain hanging on them, or springing up in eddies and flying before the driving blast with the mournful voice of winter in their dry rustle. The post-houses all dreariness, the men with heads and throats enveloped in warm nightcaps, and cravats of worsted net; the women with jackets of the same material and clattering sabots, paddling through wet straw and mire. At length a dome or a spire shows itself; Berci is passed, and the Seine, and Charenton, with its prettyish bank, and dirty street, and its *guinguettes* with their joyous announcements, their facilities for "noces et festin," *salon de cents couverts*, *billards*, leafless bowers, gardens trodden into mud, and shutters exhibiting the tempting *gigot*, or ham with a fat eel twined round it, or the *bonne bierre de Mars*, throwing off two foaming streams from a narrow necked bottle into the glasses that stand at each side waiting to receive them. And now comes the Elephant, or rather its wooden case, and we are at length fairly in Paris, in the midst of the mire and bustle, the shows and shops, the busy and the idle of the Boulevards, and its everlasting jubilee. Every thing looks just as it did three years ago,—roses and violets spread out in one corner, and chestnuts

roasting in another; a few stragglers scattered before the unopened door of the Porte St. Martin, and a long *queue* at the Théâtre Madame; here a man swallowing swords, there a dirty girl in a spangled vest spinning round like a humming top; hawkers of tisane, game, steel-chains, and spectacles; grisettes (the prettiest race in Paris) tripping along in the smart cornette, immaculate stocking, and airs of gentility; females of a better dressed class, edging their way stiffly through the crowd, walking as much with their hips as their feet, and raising their unspotted petticoats, perhaps too high,* as they glide in and out through the long leafy alleys, that add their fresh perspective and original character to the charms of this pleasant scene.

We found our old quarters in the Place Vendôme unoccupied, so took possession,—dined, talked of past times over our coffee, laid plans for the future, and now begin to think of our nightcaps. But before I put on mine, I kiss my pen, as Bonaparte did his eagles (what an impudent sound that carries

* The tact with which a Frenchwoman steers through the mire, without getting a spatter, is inconceivable to one who has not seen it; it is a secret all her own.

with it); not however as the instrument of my glory, but as a dear old friend, to whom I owe many hours of happiness, because of cheerful occupation. And with this tender adieu, I close my notes,—

"To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new."

SUPPLEMENT.

"WHAT! HERE AGAIN, GOOD LADY,
WITH YOUR MOUTHFUL OF MOONSHINE."

SUPPLEMENT.

CHAPTER I.

DISTURBANCES AT PARIS IN 1830 — FIRST ACT OF A REVOLUTION — THE BARRIERE PASSED — FEARFUL INTELLIGENCE — JOIGNY — ROUTE CHANGED — TONNERRE — THE DAUPHINESS — DIJON — AUXONNE — NEW FEARS AND DANGERS — DÔLE — A STILL NIGHT — SALINS — THE FRONTIER PASSED — SWITZERLAND — COUVET — TO NEUFCHATEL — GOOD NEWS — TO BERNE.

Monday, July 26th, 1830.—The king has dissolved the parliament suddenly; no forerunner, —no intimation. Many of the deputies received their summonses to attend the opening of the Chambers on the 3rd of August, and the notification of the dissolution at the same time. The people are stupified; an atrocious proclamation covers the walls of Paris; the electors are deprived of the rights ensured them by the charter;

the periodical press is stopped; and the king is gone to Rambouillet,—to hunt!

Tuesday, 27th.—No work doing; shops shutting up; crowds in the streets; the Palais Royal closed. G—— and A—— went to Paris; returned back alarmed; they were alone in the carriage; the crowd frightened them, though all as yet is tranquil. Heaven knows how long this may continue!

The night is calm and beautiful; we are remaining on our terrace till the neighbouring clocks strike twelve. I have no inclination to sleep,—not a leaf stirs. I think there is firing in the direction of the Palais Royal; we are not certain,—and yet the ear is a sure organ when fright quickens it.

Wednesday, 28th.—The good old portress from the Rue de Rivoli has come to take leave of us; she speaks of horrors that took place yesterday; the Garde Royale firing on the people,—the dying and the dead heaped in the streets. One young man, a soldier of the guards, refused to fire; his comrades seized him; "Fusillez moi!" he cried, falling on his knees, "fusillez moi! je mérite bien la mort, mais je ne tirerai jamais sur mes compatriotes, mes frères!"

This cannot last long. If the king is not blind,

he must see that he acts in opposition to the wishes of the nation, and risks the crown of his successors: by and by, the alternative of abdication may not be left him. Nothing so fearful as the inflexibility of weakness! I dread leaving Paris, to travel slowly through the heart of France, —the rumours of revolution, of massacres flying before us, and kindling the already agitated spirits into exasperation,—passing through fortified towns, perhaps in a state of dangerous fermentation, carrying with us the mark of English, whom Polignac has not endeared to the people. We should probably remain safe and unnoticed in the midst of crowds, but we are going into broad daylight danger. Dear Mrs. —— and the beloved —— have come to bid us good by. Lady —— was here the moment before; they do not appear alarmed, and yet every one urges us to hurry forward; and now they say the barrières are closing.

Sent back from the first barrière,—no one allowed to pass. Crossed the corner of the Place Louis Seize; saw a troop of dragoons guarding some carts, in which were wounded men. Still we felt no alarm,—it was a sort of infatuation; I could not imagine danger at Paris, it seemed to me as if we fled from safety.

But from the moment we got upon the quays,

my eyes were opened. At every eight or ten paces, groupes of gloomy-looking men crowded together, arming as they could; some with long knives, others with naked swords, others with pikes to which they had fastened the first weapon that had presented itself. Even oars and pieces of wood were seized upon by those who could find nothing more effective; women aiding and encouraging, some gaily dressed up as for a jubilee, others dirty and desperate, all looking as if eager to provoke the worst. Not a shop or first floor open.

As we advanced towards the Quai St. Michel, and lower, the gloom augmented; crowds thickening, people more fierce and foul, women and sometimes men crying out, "Ils fuient! ils fuient!" "Sauvez vous, canaille d'Anglais,—à la lanterne! à la lanterne!" And then utter solitude; streets totally deserted, houses closed up, and the sun blazing on all this desolate nakedness. Never saw the majesty of the people before in its robes of state, and hope never to see it again. As we approached the barrière (a neglected one beyond the Jardin des Plantes) the people laughed at us. —Fancied it was closed, and that they enjoyed our disappointment.—It was a nervous moment, but our party behaved admirably; pale cheeks but not a word, not even a frightened or mistrustful look.

Heaven be praised, the barrière is passed! We had not a moment to lose; the crowds were gathering from all quarters,—saw a *corps-de-garde* burning as we passed. An awful stillness; not a carriage in movement; not a wheel rolling within sight or sound but ours. Prayed inwardly, as the open country spread itself out before us. Every where the most profound silence. We got out at about half-past twelve; I think the barrières must have been closed immediately after, for no one followed us, nor did we see a single traveller till we got to Melun. Inn full of terrified people, stopping to learn whether they might venture on in safety to Paris; we counselled all who applied to us for information, to return from whence they came.

Thursday.—Overtaken at Montreau by a diligence, the only carriage we had seen since Paris. An Englishman sprang out and stopped us; his information was most alarming: Paris in a state of insurrection; cannon placed at the barrières,—defended by the Garde Royale; taken by the people,—retaken by the Garde,—and, when he escaped at three in the morning, in possession of the National Guard, who, under the command of their old general, Lafayette, had hastily embodied and declared for the people;—the king gone none knew where; gens d'armes massacred, (he had seen

their heads carried about on pikes);—the regiments of the line had refused to fire,—none declaring for the king but the Garde Royale; the guard-houses burning in all quarters. This gentleman had escaped with difficulty in a cart; he heard that the frontiers would be closed in a day or two. My heart sunk:—our poor friends! what will become of them!

Friday at noon.—Reached Joigny. The mistress of the inn gives us terrifying accounts of Paris. A letter conveyed to her privately states, that it is bloodily contested for within the walls. A woman writes to her, and the dispatch (though penned within sight of all the horrors which it details) is clear and concise as that of the coolest headed general:—"They fight (she says) on the Pont d'Austerlitz,—the Faubourg St. Marceau, against the king's troops. French against French,—brothers against brothers,—children against parents! The cuirassiers are annihilated; our people wear their uniforms; they have flung their bodies into the Seine. Women and children assist in tearing up the pavement and in carrying up the stones to the tops of the houses, from whence they shower them down upon the enemy. Lafayette attacks the Tuileries; Marmont defends it with the guards,—'les brigands.' Marmont has betrayed

the people; he has caused false cartouches to be distributed amongst them,*—they are furious; they swear to massacre him and his adherents. At this moment the Tuileries is stormed!"

God protect poor ——, (my heart shudders when I think of her), and our other dear friends. Heaven be merciful to them! The good woman here pities my deep distress; she promises to have two letters conveyed for me to Paris;—I have entrusted her with them.

How far was I from anticipating what has happened, when I quitted Paris with reluctance, dreading to cross the Departments and thinking that safety could be found only in the screening crowds of a capital. I have not asked, I dare not, if the cry was against strangers. God grant they may be forgotten!

At three o'clock Wednesday afternoon, "Rouen," she said, had arrived at the gates of Paris: she did not say the *people* of Rouen. The sound was bold and historical; I thought of the old civil wars,—foreign wars seem things of course; but the home havoc, the massacres, the monstrous violations of nature! The good women advises us to leave our luggage here, and to depart in-

* Such was then the report of the day.

stantly while post-horses can still be procured; every moment we may expect to find the roads blocked up,—to have the post-horses seized. Our position is most uncomfortable; upwards of three hundred miles before us, through an agitated, perhaps revolted country, and Paris in the rear!

Our good counsellor advises us to change our route, and instead of going by Auxerre to take the road to Tonnerre, to avoid the people of Lyons, who may be on the move for Paris. These roving bands are more to be dreaded even than the marauders of the capital: "des hommes forts pour les massacres," as a girl said at Montreau. I shall never forget the woman at Joigny; she comforted me a little when my heart was bursting,—God bless her for it! I try to think that, by her assistance, some place of refuge may be found for ——. We have taken her advice and are off.

Eight o'clock in the evening.—Changed horses at Tonnerre. The Dauphiness arrived at four, and means to stay the night. The people came round the carriage, inquiring about Paris; we could not give them much intelligence. They had heard of the cannonading. A woman in mourning stood at the door of the inn; her agony was indescribable; she had two sons (youths) at Paris,—students, I think she said they were.—

Poor unfortunate creature! No grief is like the grief of a mother; a mother's heart has such a capacity for joy or sorrow, and for gratitude too! Mine was quite full when I thought that my dear son was safe in England.—A few days earlier, and I should have been like this poor woman.

Hitherto all has been quiet along the road, a sort of tranquil but inquiring silence. At Tonnerre something more appears:—"Les brigands," some voices cried, as we stopped for horses. The woman at Joigny said "La Dauphine sera arrêtée à Dijon, Dijon est prêt." It is no longer safe to be in the track of the Royal Family.

A calm beautiful evening. Arrived at midnight at Ancy-le-franc, and at day-break at Montbard. In every village the inhabitants ran out, as if they would read the news in our eyes. Intense heat; the harvest getting in. This is perhaps our best security; there are fewer idlers thrown loose on mischief. Passed through Val de Suzon opposing its sequestered beauty, lone and majestic, to the workings of our intense anxieties. The calm of nature will sometimes communicate itself to the disturbed heart, but not in a case like ours. Immediate danger is all-absorbing, and the thought of those we have left behind!

If it were not for the rapidity with which we

are hurried along, I think I should go wild. Dijon appears.—I have frightful forebodings about Dijon. I don't know why, but I would give the world to have passed it. Stopped to change horses, and fortunately near to the entrance of the town. The people crowded round, questioning us; they were dissatisfied with our answers; we hurried on. Streets crowded, gloomy aspects, threatening words.—It was an awful moment; the *quays* of Paris again, but fiercer, more in movement,—a straw would have turned the balance. Perhaps our postillions knew it, for they went like the wind, cracking their whips and shouting as if they carried the news of a victory. Expressions of hatred towards the English rang in our ears:—"Brigands, menteurs, canaille d'Anglais," were poured upon us. A stone was flung at Mark; it grazed his temple, but he had the presence of mind not to notice it in any way:—a look might have been fatal.

Parties of gaily dressed women walked about; some stood at their doors staring exultingly, enjoying the scene with audacious, I may say atrocious delight. Troops were in the square—their arms grounded. To-night something serious is expected.

Learned, this moment, that the Dauphiness had

stopped yesterday at Dijon, and had gone to the play. A strange moment to choose for it. She was saluted on entering by loud cries of "Vive la charte!"—"Vive la liberté!" The same cries followed her carriage when she quitted the theatre; stones were flung at it. An officer in command ordered the troops to fire; they refused,—their arms were taken from them, and they were put in confinement. The townsmen do the duty; no work going on any where,—manufactories shutting up, and crowds of necessitous and desperate men thrown into violence and crime. The heat increases; it is almost insupportable. I dread sleep, but cannot keep my eyelids open; they close in spite of me, and the next moment I start up terrified. The harvest looks rich and smiling. Oh, what a blessing it is when we get out of the towns, and away from the sinister-looking inhabitants! The country people look good and civil; we breathe freely amongst them.

Auxonne, at seven in the evening. I did not like the look of its fortifications, though the sun shone brightly and beautifully upon them; at first the people seemed civilly disposed towards us, but, as they gathered round while we changed horses, the usual suspicions showed themselves. Several persons came to the doors of the carriage, and

made the usual inquiries. I told them what we had seen before we quitted Paris, adding that we could not vouch for anything more, as we were ourselves the only travellers on the road. We did not think it safe to say all that we had heard before such a mob, mixed up with military, not knowing how they might be disposed. Our being the only persons who had passed during four days, (neither diligence, or mail, or any other conveyance circulating) is very much against us. The people said to each other, "Who are these who have found means to quit Paris, when no one else was allowed to do so? they must have had a special permission!" However, they went away quietly, seeming at first satisfied with what we had told them; but presently they again collected, and some military who had mixed with the crowd talked vehemently, saying that we had deceived them, that we knew more than we chose to tell, that we ought to be forced to speak, and that the gates of the town should be closed upon us. At this disagreeable moment it was found necessary to grease the wheels of the carriage, which took up some time; and we remained within hearing of the most alarming threats long enough to make us fear their execution.

But we have left Auxonne behind us, and again

breathe freely, with a charming summer sky and a moon breaking through it in such quiet purity, that the contrast brought tears into my eyes when I thought of the scenes which might at that moment be acting beneath it.

When my mind turns that way, I feel as if my heart would burst. I think we should pass on quietly, if it were not for the "bad eminence" on which we are placed. There are none to divide curiosity with us, or to divert suspicion; the people who surround us look as if they would say, "Why can you alone pass? how is it that none can get out but you?" I sometimes dread that they may fancy us persons whose escape is of great moment, but in our circumstances one fancies every thing; the suggestions of fears are endless. However, we put a good face upon it and pass on with tranquil countenances, showing no marks either of anxiety or dread, mistrust or defiance. Nothing can surpass the courage and calmness of the young people. Met two gentlemen in a phaeton after we had left Auxonne; they stopped us and asked anxiously about Paris. We told them what we had heard at Joigny; they uttered an expression of inquietude. In general the expression of joy is evident. Heard after we left Auxonne that something alarming is anticipated at Dijon.

It was night when we got into Dôle. The post-master refused us horses. "Ils ne passeront pas," he cried roughly; "allez à la préfecture." We trembled; I got out for a moment; my limbs were stiffened from having been so long in the same position. The crowd pressed us; one cried, "V'là les brigands qui viennent manger notre pain!" another was offended at my composure. At Auxonne the cry was, "Voyez comme ils sont mal à leur aise!" There are moments when every thing offends.

Changed our route and struck off for Salins, instead of Besançon. Stopped at two o'clock at a large farm-house ("la Poste,") in a lonely hamlet. The moon had sunk, but there were still some stars in the heavens, and a pale planet lending us its dim melancholy light. We were glad to rest our limbs a little, after having been so long cramped up in a closely-stowed carriage; and, not having tasted any thing since the day before, but a little wine and water, we made our way to the kitchen, and having roused up a poor girl who was half dead with fatigue from her harvest-work, got a little bread and cheese, though we had none of us much appetite for it. However, it was a moment of repose; and then there was something soothing in the pale starlight, the sweet breath of flowers,

the peaceful country air of a large farm-yard with its hay-carts and cow-sheds, and character of peaceful occupation, that was not without effect even on our agitated minds. The interior of a stable lighted faintly, with an uncertain perspective and a coming and going of dim figures, might have served as a model for Rembrandt.

Found some difficulty in getting postillions. L—— roused the master's son from his bed, who good-naturedly consented to drive us. Oh, how long did his indispensable toilet seem to me! and when he did appear, I thought he never would have ceased walking round and round his beasts, patting and caressing, and altering a hundred and fifty things about them; while the dogs, roused by the various noises, growled lazily or yelled fiercely, answered by the drowsy bark of some more distant guardian not sufficiently interested in the matter to put forth lustily.

Sunday, August 1st.—Awoke from a troubled sleep (dreaming horrors about poor ——) just as day broke on a charming mountain-country, broken up like Switzerland; but it is still France, though soft and Arcadian as if turbulence and faction had never approached it. Dived down into Salins, a strange place, sooty and gloomy like a city of the Cyclops. It was nearly burnt down a little

while ago, and what remains of the old part seems calcined; but the same Cyclops have, I suppose, built it up again, for it looks as if it was done for eternity. They were no epicures in light, or air, who built the old town; but the new one is the march of intellect exemplified. Four o'clock,—and nobody awake. We have roused up two or three people, who will not believe what we tell them. They know nothing here, but surmise something from the breaking up of all communication with the capital. We are the only signs of the outward world which have reached them since the 27th.

Tugged up mountains that seemed to go into the clouds. How intolerable is delay to the impatient spirit! a light-hearted lad who came up the hill with the *chevaux de renfort*, made nothing of it; he came up (he said) four or five times a-day; once seemed to me a penance. Never was such heat! my eyelids drop, and yet I cannot sleep. At length Pontarlier appears; I fancied it fortified, but it is not; my heart feels all the lighter for the discovery. Nothing seems known here, nobody questions us; a crowd of innocent-looking children, with prayer-books in their hands, and some gaping country folks gathered round us, but only to stare and laugh at our huge Spanish

fans, which have not yet, I suppose, gained ground in the provinces. Caught a distant view of a priest, the only one we had seen since we left Paris; remarked it, because priests are generally the most prominent features in country towns. At Jougne the people of the Douane knew nothing whatever.

And now, Heaven be thanked! we have crossed the frontier, and I can look at my children without feeling my heart dying within me. It is hardly large enough for its grateful emotions, its feelings of intense thankfulness to the Divine Providence which has so mercifully protected us, and which, I trust, has preserved also those for whom our hearts still feel the utmost anxiety.

Monday, August 2nd.—Dear quiet Couvet! I shall never forget you, nor the valley that lapsed before us as we ran away from the horrors of civil warfare, rejoicing to find ourselves in the calm haven of beautiful Switzerland. How fresh and tranquil it looks after poor France! The living streams, the tender green of the corn, (nothing yellow here yet), the charming cottage with its shade and its flowers, and its homely thatch overlooking the quaint window, and the comfortable people who have no king to play the tyrant or the madman with them. It spreads out before us like

a paradise peopled with good spirits; again we feel secure and thankful, and if we could forget those whom we have left behind, should feel happy also.

Whenever my mind seeks an image of repose, it will turn back to Couvet,—our first port of refuge. It was delightful to sleep here last night amidst flower-gardens, and mountain-meadows, and home-looking people, after having posted for nights and days through a country primed for explosion, with the fear of death or imprisonment constantly before our eyes. Not a sound alive in this hot noon, but the flute of a boy who is conquering a gamut. How strange it seems to us that people should think at this moment of music, or of any thing else out of Paris! and yet how egotistical to insist that the object of our interest should be also that of others! This is not the finest entrance into Switzerland, yet it has a sweet and striking affinity to its higher features; it is the vestibule of a magnificent dome painted in light and beautiful arabesques, that have the tone and colouring of the interior decorations, but not the magnitude or splendour.

Went to bed last night so completely exhausted, that I expected to sleep like the "belle au bois," but I believe that I was too weary for repose, for

the first gleam of morning awoke me; so I got up and looked out at the window. A cock was crowing out the dawn exultingly, just as if he made it; there was at first a gray light, watery and uncertain, and now and then the twitter of an early bird, and a gentle bursting sound, and a low stirring in the leaves, and beneath,—as if something worked under the earth; and then the burst of song, and the awakening of all things into life, and the power, and splendour, and glory of nature. I have often seen all this before, and in moments of greater magnificence; but I never felt myself so deeply touched by the sublime spectacle of opening day, as when I saw it break upon the village of Couvet.

We are in the Val Travers, and Rousseau's Moitiers is near to us, but we have not time to think of it now. At Neufchatel we hope to have news from Paris; here no one knows or cares about it. The men in this peaceful valley make watches, and the women lace, and sit at their doors plying their nimble bodkins with that kind of bold yet somewhat squalid look, which distinguishes these "free maids" wherever they are found.

Quitted Couvet in the sweetest of evenings. As we drove along rapidly, a spring broke; the delay was long, and it was almost night when we reached

the defile of La Cluzette. I saw it but imperfectly, but the huge vertical rocks that appeared to project across the valley looked white, not the true gray hue. I may perhaps have seen them in a false light. An excellent road, but sometimes hanging over a precipice and unfenced,—not without its terrors for those who love or fear them. I am not sure that I should like to live under the protection of rocks that hold such close communion with the skies, others however think differently. A hamlet has niched itself below, and looks the image of security. There was a time when I should have thought it paradise to have had a cottage hid in the green hollow of a mountain, or hanging on the brink of a lake, but one hears so much in Switzerland of *écroulements* and *éboulements;* of mountains sliding into lakes, and lakes undermining mountains, that fancy becomes suddenly cooled, and is fain to content itself with flying visits.

If there be night and day in heaven, I think the moon must rise there under some such aspect as that which it assumed this evening. The last gorge of the valley was worthy of such a light; it was like a poet's vision, vague and beautiful. The lake of Neufchatel closed it calmly, but the far mountains were no longer visible,—night had dropped upon them; an hour earlier, and we

should have seen the high Alps in their pale winding sheets. Even in our agitated state of mind, the impression was powerful. The mountains, running down into the earth and throwing out their giant shadows, produced a sublime effect; and farther on the moon gleaming through some still tall trees, a tender and poetic one,—a kind of placid eastern picture calmer than our hearts.

Tuesday, 13th.—A newspaper at last! God grant us good tidings! My heart chokes me. A moment ago, I would have given the universe for one; and now I am afraid to look at it. God be praised! the conquerors have been merciful,—even the Tuileries have not been pillaged. My agitation was so great, that I could hardly see the letters; but my heart is somewhat comforted.—And now we have another of the 30th. The good woman at Joigny did not deceive me: the answer to the letter, which she undertook to have conveyed to Paris in a desperate moment, has reached me, and, though others of later date have entirely relieved my mind from its horrible apprehensions, yet this instance of good faith gives me great pleasure.

No getting horses to proceed to Berne. A fête in the neighbourhood, and the Diet farther off have carried away all that were commandable, but the

happy news has given us patience. Neufchatel is not of a high order of scenery; it is a family picture compared with the battle-pieces and Salvators of the Oberlands and the forest cantons; but it has a wide cool spread of waters, and some soft green about it, and a fine Alpine chain in the distance when it deigns to make revelations. When we first visited this country, we came by the banks of the lake from Yverdun (itself agreeably rather than strikingly situated) to Neufchatel, along shores gracefully imbayed, and with a soft home character of beauty which deeper into the hills runs (as we are told) into picture and poetry. The number of handsome and handsomely kept up houses in and about Neufchatel is very remarkable, —its size considered. Not only the comforts, but the silken superfluities of life seem spread out with affluence in this social paradise of Switzerland, this true *pays de Cocagne*, where if the trees do not actually drop flasks of champagne and fowls ready roasted, it is, I suppose, because the burghers would not be at the trouble of picking them up. Every where else one is told how happy the people are at Neufchatel, and how many causes combine to make them so;—liberty, both civil and religious, industrious habits, commercial prosperity, and no taxes.

Add to these blessings a genial climate and cultivated tastes, and the circle is perfect.* No letters for us this morning; so being most anxious to hear something of Paris, and naturally thinking that a man of Mr. Rougemont's commercial importance would of course have received the latest intelligence, L—— inquired where he lived, and was told that he was then at his *Palais* at the other side of the lake. I remember that some one at Geneva talked of the Palais Eynard; perhaps in the phrase of the country it may mean mansion.

Wednesday, 14th.—How often did we exclaim in the cold month of May, "shall we never see summer again?" and now she comes scorching, and blistering, and throwing her red hot arms about us till we are quite burned up; and we wish her in Palestine and ourselves in the Aar, that flounces by with an air of cool impertinence in which we would fain be sharers; but as that is impossible, to solace our spleen we find fault with its waters, and say they are soapy.

Berne.—Now that the blessed news has quieted our fears, we run about, and make friends with the Aar, and say civil things of it, and praise the sweet

* What a different picture have recent events presented!

valley which it has all to itself, and the peaceful charm (the charm of charms to us now) which spreads itself like the wings of an angel over it. To-day we have run away from all this beauty, and to-morrow we shall leave Thoun behind, and in the midst of its camp as usual.

CHAPTER II.

UNTERSEEN — IMPROVEMENTS — LODGING-HOUSES — SHEPHERDESSES — BONINGEN — THE JUNGFRAU — ADVANTAGES OF TRAVEL — EVENING IN AN OBERLAND VILLAGE — CHALET OF THE HANDECK — THE GRIMSEL — GLACIERS OF THE RHONE — A PASTORAL BREAKFAST — THE FURCA — CHALETS AND SHEPHERDS — HOSPITAL — ANDERMATT — VALLEY OF URSEREN — NEW DEVIL'S BRIDGE — WASEN — THE INN — THE HAUTE REUSS — SCENERY OF THE FOREST CANTONS — ATMOSPHERE AND ARTISTS.

UNTERSEEN is, alas! no longer my Unterseen. Admiring it as I did, I cannot behold it without sorrow straightening fast out of its picturesque rickets, and bidding fair to be in another year or two, a very upright, common-place concern. It already has new houses, and old ones modernized, and circulating libraries, (one at least,) and hot baths, and cafés that talk of ices,—perhaps a

museum, or a ball room; or if not now, it will next season, and in two or three seasons more, probably, a Redoute and a roulette table. One part of the town seems still ready to tumble into the river, and if I could sketch, I would transfer it to my paper before the carpenter or the plasterer had time to prop it up again, and make it "plus propre,"—as the French say when they meditate an awful attack on the over-luxuriance of nature, or the harmonious colouring of time. Luckily the mountains cannot be redressed into shapeliness, we are always sure of their delightful warpings.

However, I forgive Unterseen its improvements while it keeps within its present boundaries, but I dread its arriving at Interlacken. Scattered houses are nothing; they have fields between them, and trees, and gardens;—but a street! a street of a quarter of a mile long! and then lateral streets,—in short a town! What would become of my Oberland paradise, my Interlacken? It was provoking enough without this addition, to think of the lodging-houses taking possession of the velvet lawns, and throwing out their lures of cheap living and genteel society; there are half a score of them now, all trying to undersell each other. The usual advertisements of such establishments "board and lodging on moderate terms," swell into extravagance

when the good *frau* of the casino puts forth her prospectus; "breakfast, dinner, tea, and beds,—all excellent, and all for five francs a-day."—"Five francs a-day!" exclaims her opposite neighbour, "I'll do it for four." A little constraint, however, attends this lodging-house business; if you enter, you are bound to stay for eight days, consequently if the society happens to be disagreeable, to endure it for eight days, perhaps without any variety; so that *sans-gène* people still prefer,—not the hotel, for that is very uninviting, but the pretty apartments dependent on it, but in another building, though the expense is double. You can stay or go, be in society or out of it, form your own party or live by yourself, just as you happen to be disposed; and this liberty of option varies the mountain-life very agreeably. People who suit each other make small cheerful parties, and go off to worship at the Ghiesbach, paddle on the lake, or dine at Brientz, Grindelwald, or Lauterbrunnen. Each village has its house of entertainment, where ramblers are sure to find an abundant table neatly served, with the chance of trout just caught, and the certainty of delicious scenery.

Loving nature as I do, for her beautiful self, I have always held pic-nics in particular abhorrence. The mere necessity of being "actively pleasant,"—

of contributing your quantum of forced vivacity to the general stock, is enough to cloud all the sunshine and discolour all the streamlets in Arcadia. Hitherto we have acted upon this conviction, but yesterday we grew *expansive*, as poor —•— used to say, and joined a cheerful party on the wing to Grindelwald, where we spent some hours very agreeably. The drive from Interlacken is divine; when I saw it before, I scarcely said enough of it; it runs Lauterbrunnen very hard: it is not so perfect, not so positive a gem, but perhaps the eye dives into its delightful depths more uninterruptedly. The position of the village is far inferior to that of beautiful Lauterbrunnen, but the introductory chapter struck me to-day prodigiously. As we returned, the mountain perspective had all the advantages of vapour, producing, amongst many singular effects, one that was quite magical, —an airy arch thrown across the valley, with the landscape seen through it like a vision.

But if the valley itself be Arcady, the poor shepherds are certainly not Arcadians; and the shepherdesses!—I have seldom seen more miserable looking creatures. Three poor ragged souls rushed out from a melancholy looking hut, thrusting each a broken plate into our faces; one decked out with half a dozen nuts flanked with four shrivelled crab

apples, another with a dead pink inserted in a bunch of rue, and stuck into the middle of a few dry bilberries, or cranberries, or something in that way, bespeaking a penury of produce of apiece with their squalid visages.

This evening the sun went down "lackey'd" by such a "train of liv'ried angels," all floating about in purple and fine gold, that we were tempted to run after it; so we drove westward as long as we could, and returned by Boningen, a village with trees about it close to the lake of Brientz, where those who find Interlacken over gay, may retire. Too many frogs, and a gallows not far off; an aguish-looking place, but cool and quiet, and getting into vogue by the aid of a new inn, that looks (as all the houses do here while they are new) like a toy made to order, and just sent home in a box. Children pretty and transparent, with the pale beauty and fragility of water lilies.

Another bright balmy evening. Sat on a bench before the door till all the lights in Interlacken were extinguished, except (perhaps) *the préfet's* who received. We are, I believe, the only inmates of this house who had courage to resist the novel temptation of a soirée in the valley of walnut-trees; but we preferred the stars to the *préfet's* lamps, and made the excuse of our travelling dresses.

Who that has seen the moon shining on the Jungfrau, as it does at this moment, can ever forget it?—the pale palace of snow, bright and colourless, without herb, or leaf, or shadow, the pure light lying on its white summits and touching their points with its ethereal silver, and the single star that shines beside it in the blue heaven, and looks as if it had risen from its bosom and still watched fondly over the cradle of its beauty!

There must be a great charm in the mere act of travelling; so many, who are neither quick-minded enough to observe, nor ardent enough to enjoy the good things set before them, seem to find pleasure in it. Perhaps this charm consists in the licence which travelling allows to idleness, without the drawbacks of shame or responsibility. Ramblers in summer countries,—I do not speak of travellers whose views are enlarged and scientific, but of mere ramblers,—make an occupation of idleness. If one of this description be driven along a road, nature runs by his side changing at every step the pictures in her great gallery, while he looks on at his ease, without the trouble of driving in a hook or drawing out a nail. Wherever he arrives he finds all things provided for him, and yet may at once satisfy his conscience and humour his vanity with the idea that he not only is not idle, but in a course of improvement, and while doing nothing,

is actually gaining a footing in society; a step, it is true, below Humboldt or the intrepid explorers of the African deserts, but still a footing from which he can talk boldly of

"Alps and Appenine,
The Pyrennean, and the river Po,"

and step into the travellers' club, if the members are graciously pleased to permit it.

To-day at dinner two English visitors, who had already been helped to some small fish fried, put some brocoli, as it was carried rapidly round the table, on their plates, probably fearing to lose the one, while they discussed the other. A French lady who sat near, smiled significantly,—it was a note for her journal:—"N. B. *All* the English eat vegetables with fish."

September 1st.—To Meyringhen, by the pale light of a very unreal moon; not a true Swiss moon as clear as amber, but a thing like the Veiled Prophet, a kind of silvery mystery that developed the immortal architecture of nature as moonlight alone can develope architecture of any kind. Meyringhen had its share of the beams, and looked like all that the word *village* has in it of charming. By the by, moonlight is the becoming hour of an Oberland village; the good folks sit at their doors

enjoying themselves in their own quiet way, the women ranged at one side,—each figure the duplicate of its neighbour, and all looking like a religious sisterhood in their uniform garb of black and white; the men at the other, their heads buried in cotton night-caps, musing like Hernhutters, or discoursing gravely. This does not sound brilliantly, but there is a tone of serious sweetness about these evening scenes which has its charm. Often a large tree throws its shadow over the quiet group, and fountains glisten, and streams run away with the moonbeams; and children in their night-dresses—or undresses—(often very literal), crowd on each other's backs to look at the strangers. Never saw such swarms; every cottage like an ant hill;—Malthus would be given to the dogs here. The "Wildman" greatly beautified, and a supplement run up before it which quite shuts out my three cascades.

Thought more highly than ever of the Hasli Grund, and of the rich opening of the Susten pass, and the beautiful points that break off from the graceful Plaffenstock, and shoot up into the heavens. The fine shelf, too, that hangs over the Aar, gains by intimacy; but I had forgotten the road,—it is fearful; walkers may go any where, but for those who put their trust in horses! Here,

in the mountain passes, the horses literally go up and down stairs, and that on the edge of a precipice! We do these things, but, (as L—— wisely observes) ought we? He saw the horse which —— rode, hang one of its hind feet over the edge of a precipice; but not finding a footing, it sagaciously threw its whole weight inwards, and thus recovering its equilibrium, escaped the false step which must inevitably have proved fatal.

Reposed once more in the chalet of the Handeck, —a picture of a hut, with a kitchen worthy the superintendence of Dame Leonora herself. Quite a jewel for a cabinet picture, walls like soot, light coming in at the door, and down the capacious chimney; there might have been a loop-hole besides, but I doubt it, for the mistress was in profound shadow at the end of her frying-pan.

The proprietors of two packsaddle mules from Belinzona, and half a dozen guides, were installed in *the* room, and we had the interval between it and the kitchen; with the cattle looking in at us from their manger, all in a row, as they are in the old Dutch nativities, and mixing their sweet breath with the odour of a fry that was hissing and blackening on the kitchen fire, for the dinner of some ravenous travellers, who in the mean time were cheating, each his particular Cerberus, with

a humble sop. A thread of water trickled along behind us, through a lumber of old stools and disabled milk-pails, and the spoils of the chamois were hung about or spread out temptingly, under the form of rings, knives, boot-hooks, &c. At the close of October, no more ramblers being expected, the occupiers of the chalet lock the door, and leaving their penates to the chance of *débacle* and *avalanche*, descend to Meyringhen, (the Oberland capital) go through the process of a winter's fumigation, and when the warm sun returns, uncoil, and mount up again to their eyrie, to take advantage of the picturesque fever, and supply milk and kirchwasser to the scene hunters.

I have no interest in the Hospice of the Grimsel; there is no picture in its desolation; it is savage rather than grand. Lifted above the symphonics of nature, but not above the noise of man, it has the gloom without the majesty of solitude. If its dismal lake lying in the hollow of encircling rocks bare and melancholy, reflected no image but that of the sullen sky, or its rocks returned no echo but the moaning of the wind labouring through their fissures, it would be powerful,—but it is only naked. The great altars which nature dresses in the desert should have no visible worshippers. What sound and fulness in the silence of nature!

how prolific of thought and profound feeling! But here, before the door of the hut, sit two lazy Swedes, (one as fat as a whale) sporting like seals on an ice-berg, and a dozen straw hats looking on, some hurrying dinner, others retarding it, and all ready to grumble when it comes.

A few rooms are adding to fort Desolate. Rooms are run up here like shelves; two or three carpenters come and knock one up, and very neatly too, in less time than we should take to paper it. Altogether it looks very like a carriers' inn in a raw French village, an insufferable thing in a spot where nothing nearer to civilization than the log-hut of a missionary, or the rude cell of a hermit who might be allowed to sit at its entrance at evening and spell the stars, as the sages of our old poets used to do, ought to be tolerated.

Wednesday.—Ran away from the Hospice to the Glaciers of the Rhone, and without an invitation from the sky, which was dark and threatening. A loose slippery ascent, and then two small steel-coloured lakes; one is called the dead lake, and well merits its melancholy appellation. All these silent pools, including that which fills up the hollow of the Grimsel, have a peculiar character of gloom. Lake scenery is usually solemn, at least pensive; but these have a forgotten aspect, as if nature had

overlooked them. If a bird could find its way to the Grimsel, I think it would drop dead in its flight across this lake, as if it were Avernus. Dismounted as we approached the glaciers, and came at once upon the lone magnificence of the frozen city, from behind whose crystal battlements legions of spirits probably looked down upon us. Is this the great gate of a Pandemonium, or the outward rampart of a heavenly citadel? What awful process is nature now performing in her untrodden world behind that eternal bulwark? But imagination grows too bold here, and wants the drag chains which cold and rain, crumbling paths, and precipices fasten on it.

Still do what we may, in such scenes imagination will not be silenced, nor thought either; and as the white mountains rise before us, we are tempted to inquire by what immortal cement does nature make to be firm as the rock itself, that weak material which we use figuratively as an image of fragility? What a contrast to the inconstancy of human greatness are those pale phantoms, wearing their white diadems in majestic permanency, while crowns of gold and crowns of iron shift their possessors with a changeableness to which the instability of snow affords no parallel!

The Rhone issues from its icy birth-place without

any announcing pomp; it flows through a valley soft and verdant in comparison with those which we have left behind, and striking from its noble mountain outline and utter loneliness. The solitude of the Grimsel is interrupted (as I have already said) by the hum of an inn, and the bustle of travellers arriving every moment with their knapsacks and their guides, and their look of fatigue, importance, and good-humoured enjoyment,—pleased to have performed what they think a feat, and delighted to talk of it. But here is the stillness of death; the verdure of some real grass, the living darkness of a few tall pines, and the movement of the Rhone feebly visible from the heights, alone attest the progress of life in this magnificent solitude.

The first few steps after we had left our horses were not encouraging; the depth was dizzy, and the path (a shelf overhanging a precipice) so fearfully narrow,—not a line beyond the footsteps,—that more than one of our party had a momentary vertigo. At this nervous juncture, Mrs. — exclaimed "If this be pleasure, I should like to know what you call pain," in a tone of so much uneasiness, humour, and good-humour, that we laughed on our shelf as if we had been on a bowling green. The danger was, however, soon over, and we had

leisure to look and think, but when we contemplate these stern and unfrequent aspects of nature, thought finds no resting-place. A vague feeling of awe, of wonder, caused by the presence of unbounded power working by means and for ends beyond our scrutiny, absorbs the mind without leading it to any fixed point; it feels lost in the chaos into which it has been forced by the ardour of conjecture, the impulse of inquiry. If there was wanting a proof of the immortality of the soul, it would seem to present itself in this stretching out of the mind after that which is unattainable to its limited grasp,—some mystery always thwarts its vigilance, yet excites its action. If we wished not, hoped not, sought not, wondered not, we might be led to say, "here is our boundary;" but the mind is still unsatisfied, even in its fulness, and if there existed no other link, even by that alone should we hold to immortality.

A meagre and early breakfast had left or given us very accommodating appetites, so we entered the chalet at the foot of the glaciers, ——'s horse having first insisted on taking a flying leap over an angry torrent that swept across our path. He cleared it in fine style, and landing with his fore-feet on a piece of almost perpendicular rock as smooth as glass, made me quake with terror; but

he turned off on the turf with the skill of an old offender, who loves to get into mischief but knows from long practice how to get out of it again. The chalet,—now metamorphosing into a house of refuge, or of entertainment, or whatever people may please to call it,—a hut, in short, where you may be sheltered from the storm or carried away by it, just as it happens, did not afford us very dainty fare. I doubt if we should have quarrelled with Caliban's pig-nuts, but the filberts would have been a treat. I have read of a dinner of herbs where love is, as better than finer things with strife; but ours was a dinner of grease, grease without bread! Well might we have exclaimed with the daughters of Jerusalem, "where is corn and wine?" Alas! the one was absent, and the other might have conscientiously called itself vinegar; but we ate and even declared it good. In travelling, the religion of the stomach is often turned to heresy; we swear by false gods when hunger will have it so, and disown them when objects of more legitimate worship present themselves.

The descent on foot to the chalet occupied an hour and forty minutes; on quitting it, we mounted upwards by a path that looked upon the glaciers, and then turned into another valley colder and more lifeless, but grandly walled in, and not

without its carpeting of many-coloured mosses, juniper, rhododendron, (not in blow now) and other hardy things, that mix up richly and dress out the rocks with their mellow verdure. Now and then a clump of the small star-like daisy embellishes the turf, and even the golden butter-cup is sometimes seen glowing amidst the humid blossoms of the cold bright gentian. I often wish that I knew enough of botany to give names to the wild plants which sometimes cheer the eye in these sterile solitudes. When I look up at the stars I have always a similar desire, but for a higher study. No one ever loved stars and flowers as I do, who knew less of either scientifically.

Passed the cross of the Furca in a pelting storm. A cross in the desert has more religion in it than the illuminated shrine of St. Peter's; it is the voice crying in the wilderness before the invention of dogmas. Rain more or less violent during seven long hours; in that time we passed through a succession of bold bleak valleys and roaring streams, and lost—as we were told—some view of rare splendour over a mountain world of which King Fog had just crowned himself sovereign. Wretched chalets—mere heaps of loose stones, with a hole to creep in at, and miserable herdsmen in sooty nightcaps, with cold and hunger

in their blue hollow cheeks. "Les berceaux, les hameaux, les ormeaux, et leurs rameaux," are as much out of the question here, as in the charming region of St. Giles's, where the Irish shepherd pursues his pastoral calling. Had they (I mean the herdsmen) but the huge black hat slouched like a Spanish muleteer's over the nightcap, or even the rough sheep skin or blanket cloak, it would be something; but these poor souls look as if they had just escaped from the fever-ward of a hospital.

The cattle are still in the high pastures; short horned cows as bold and as wild as bulls, and bulls a great deal too familiar, I thought, walking bolt up to us as if they would call us to account in some way of their own, for encroaching on their bleak territory. Yet, notwithstanding this ungracious reception, it was pleasant after having journeyed for many hours through a dreary desert, where neither song of bird, or hum of bee, or sound of life, interrupted the silence of nature, to have our reveries broken up by the true mountain music of their bells, and see herds of cattle browsing peaceably as if there was treachery neither in path or element.

This seems a contradiction to what I have just said about the Grimsel, when I was in love with silence and utter solitude. I spoke as I felt then,

and do the same now; but independently of the bells being in keeping and the bustle out of keeping with the scene, I had not calculated how long enthusiasm awakened and kept alive merely by external objects, without any exciting aim or project, could sustain itself against rain, fog, and wind; or how long, after one is as cold as a frog and as wet as a dabchick, one can indulge in reveries about mountains that are covered with mist to their very skirts, or grow imaginative while perusing the rude enamel of a turf that oozes like a wet sponge, and answers drippingly to that most miserable word *plashy*. And then the danger.—I am not myself a coward perhaps too much the reverse; but the narrow crumbling track hanging in the air without a blade of glass between it and eternity, and the roaring torrent through which the trembling horse scarcely suffers itself to be forced, and the creaking unfenced bridge, and the steep slippery ascent, and sudden shock of the downward perpendicular plunge, are strong sedatives. To say nothing of seven hours' heavy rain, [redacted] of water running in at our necks and out at our sleeves, just as if we had been fished up out of one of the waterfalls, bonnets battered to pieces and left with fragments of gloves in the desert, hair hanging like sea-weed about our faces; and

then the continual struggle with refractory umbrellas. Every moment came a puff that turned up the whalebones, and while both hands were employed to pull them down again, came a jerk that threatened to send us head foremost out of our insecure saddles. But we have got through it all good humouredly, and even merrily, and here we are, safe from the

> "Low-brow'd rocks,
> As ragged as our locks,"

and comfortably laid up at Hospital* at the foot of the St. Gothard, thanking heaven for our escape from sore throats and fevers, and parching our damp garments over a pan of charcoal,—a night on the stove having only served to stiffen them up a little.

This morning Mr. ——, whose active and judiciously exercised kindness had greatly smoothed the difficulties of our mountain ramble, left us. Wished much to have gone over the Mont St. Gothard, at least as far as Airolo, but had too much fog, and no dry clothes. Good people at Hospital, and as much comfort as can be reasonably expected in the valley of the Urseren, where

* Or Hospendal, as the people of the country call it.

it rains five days out of six, or six out of seven, I forget which; a paradise, I think, notwithstanding, compared with the Hospice of the Grimsel. Said so to a traveller who had supped here last night, and praised the comfortable soup which the good woman of the house had brought up to our bed-chambers when we arrived cold and hungry. But he differed totally from me; his supper, he said, had been very meagre, only soup, cutlets, a little fish, and two or three other small things. I suspect that his habitual prayer is something in the way of Philibert's,—"Seigneur, je ne vous demande que le nécessaire, mais un peu en large."

Took a char-à-banc to Wasen; "injurious Hermia!" I have written char-à-banc, not being used to better things, and it was a very legitimate calèche, yellow picked out with black, with an elegant blue lining,—manufactured at Lausanne, sported for the first time, and altogether a *papier maché*, a love and dove concern compared with the usual run of mountain contrivances; in fact only too fine for our subdued, indeed disastrous [redacted]nettes. A spacious inn, reputed excellent, at Andermatt, greatly brightened up since we once passed a night there in the society of fourteen students from Gottingen; fearful society, we thought, when we saw them tumbling in, some

with oak leaves in their hats, and all with the high qualities of Captain Rolando's gentlemen in their faces. But their fierceness went no farther than the outward man, and if they were not well bred according to the canons of politeness, they certainly were so,—even to refinement,—from the impulse of good nature. Like all the German students whom we have encountered, when they became convivial they sang, and delightfully, but ceased immediately on hearing that I had gone to bed, "peur de déranger Madame," as the only one who could make himself understood said to L— — the next morning.

This time we did not stop at Andermatt, but passed on through the Urnerloch;* fancied it had been twice as long as it really is. When I first saw it, I had not made acquaintance with the galleries of the Simplon, or looked into the grotto of Pausillipo. Remembered how striking we had once thought the silence of the Urseren, when we issued from the Urnerloch with the roar of the Teüfelsbrücke,—or rather of the Reuss tearing under it—in our ears, and how soft and pastoral it looked after the wild turbulence of the Schallenen.† To-day it was only a cold grass valley,

* Perforated rock. † The gorge of the Teüfelsbrücke.

very green and very dripping, a valley of fat cheese and glistening pastures, where to be warm or dry must be the beau ideal of existence; but we are now going the contrary way, and its tameness is no longer relieved by contrast.

A fine new bridge instead of the famous old Teüfelsbrücke, safe and solid,—no suspicion of diabolical masonry here; but the old one in the air with the foam about it, was a magical thing compared with this. Dined and slept at Wasen, in the middle of the wonderful Haute Reuss, but not in the most wonderful part of it. A very decent inn of the farm-house kind. Greatly taken with its cottage parlour, and the unbroken line of casement with little round panes set in lead, that runs along two sides of it, while one half of the third is filled up by the huge square stove, and the fourth, darkly panelled, helps to relieve a showy cabinet with a fine clock upon it, and a glass case decorated with doll figures of the seasons, appropriately ornamented. N.B. Dislike the stove, because it has no eye for the fire to look out of.

Enough here of the odour of Italy to make one recollect its vicinity, every room hallowed by a crucifix, and the parlour moreover beautified by two bambinos of true Italian manufacture, swathed

in lace, and smothered in flowers; one *très fin* for the admiration of the gentry, the other *più grosso*, for the taste of the peasants, as the *kellerinn* tells us. A slight smattering of Italian, picked up from the passing muleteers, is sometimes mixed here with the barbarous German of the country; one of the servants has acquired a few words of English, which she pushes in everywhere, as the good folks of the village inns do their French word "excusez," often their only foreign attainment. Frost-bitten nymphs, mistress and maids, all but one,—the fair Anna Maria Josepha, and she too a little pinched. But —— and —— are charmed with her picturesque figure and intelligent countenance; quite a Henrietta Maria, with a row of thin hair slightly crimped across the forehead, and the rest gathered up from the roots and fastened with a gorgeous bodkin set with coloured stones to match a straight antique-looking collar of similar materials.

Sunday.—We had decided to return to Meyringhen by the Susten pass, which opens here and has its issue in the Hasli Grund. But so much snow has fallen in the night, that our guides say it would be dangerous, if not impracticable; so that we have no resource left but that of continuing our course through the valley of the Haute Reuss, and

making our way back again by the lake of Lucerne, and the valleys of the Obwalden. Raining still; but while our host is gone to look out for a vehicle for our farther conveyance, we amuse ourselves by examining the pack of a Tyrolese pedlar who dropped in just now in his vest and beaver of myrtle green, and his name, "Sebastian Binder," embroidered in silver on his broad black velvet belt. A fine specimen of the Tyrolean peasant,—handsome features, and a frank, kind-hearted look. Bought gloves, and two—what he called *portraits* of birds, tricked out in their natural feathers pasted on paper, for which he thanked me as if I had given him a stray kingdom. It is painful to see the poor women here labouring up to the Urseren with heavy loads of wood upon their backs, barefooted, or with only a wooden sandal fastened on the instep with two leather thongs. Poor things! what a different creature is woman in the brilliant circles of London or Paris, and woman in the valley of the Haute Reuss; and how little does the delicate plant whose petty disappointments are pampered into griefs, know of the withering misery, the life of penury and labour, uncheered by hope or chance of change, to which so many of her sex are condemned.

The scenery of the Oberlands is enchanting, equal to any thing, and equalled by few things in Switzerland, but the foreground figures are more varied and characteristic in the forest cantons.* Instead of the monotonous black and white of the canton of Berne, every village has its picturesque or agreeable variety; and the sort of individual painting, which the scene receives from the figures mixed up with it, gives it the same kind of spirit and identity that Poussin's groupes impress upon his landscapes. It is, perhaps, the figure of a Benedictine monk coming sunnily or thoughtfully along a forest glade, or a muleteer with his bales from Lugano or Belinzona, or a pilgrim trudging on wearily to Enseidlen, or a peasant of the Tyrol with all the music and diablerie of the Freyschutz, in his chamois boot and black feather. These sort of figures accord not only with the scene but give a fillip to the fancy, which immediately sets about making situations for them. Monasteries often dominate the lonely valleys; we dislike such institutions upon principle, but love to see the tall spire marking the distance, and to hear the bell that calls to prayer sending up its sound into the desert. The small chapel, too, with its open

* Ury, Unterwalden, Schwitz, and Lucerne.

porch, is a sweet and frequent feature in the landscape here. In the lonely wood, by the silent lake, or on the soft sward where the shadows of the chestnuts fall, the modest altar of the Madonna is found, nestled quietly in the bosom of nature, covenanting gently with the heart, and offering it images of peace and purity.

Nothing, in short, is wanting here but an atmosphere, a warmth in the aërial colouring; this is perhaps, the only defect of Swiss scenery, as it is the great defect of Swiss artists,—they copy nature with Chinese fidelity,—you have not only the sprig, but the darn also.* If the principal feature be a Swiss cottage, you may rest assured that you will not be defrauded of a pane of glass, or a single tile; the scene will be given conscientiously; it will be a true copy,—only as cold as ice; every thing will be sharply cut as in Pffyfer's model; you will not only see the mountains, you will feel their edges, but the lines that melt into the mystery of distance are always to be added by the fancy.

* Every one knows the story of the piece of muslin imitated even to the rent and darn that happened to be in the pattern bit.

CHAPTER III.

VALLEY OF THE HAUTE REUSS — TO FLUELEN — WOMEN OF BOUSCHS — THE BARON'S DAUGHTERS — STANTZ — THE CROSS-BOW — CHURCHES — LAKE OF SARNEN — THIRD THOUGHTS — CONTRASTS — OBERLAND INNS — BERNE — ST. URBAIN — FAST-DAY — MONASTIC HOSPITALITY — APPROACH TO LUCERNE — NIGHT AND DAY IN A SWISS TOWN — NUNNERIES AND NUNS — LUCERNE FROM THE LAKE — ITALIAN OPERA AT LUCERNE.

PROCURED with difficulty a waggon with benches, which with the help of a two-place char-à-banc conveyed us all to Amstag. Confirmed in all that I first thought of the Haute Reuss. In its amazing scenery every thing is combined which the eye admires in its singleness elsewhere, glory and beauty, power and peacefulness, wound up to the highest pitch of nature's diapason.

There is something very original in the character of this valley; other valleys are formed by a river

or stream dividing two mountain ranges, or a level between highlands, the road running tamely through the flat ground, or carved out from the sides of the mountains, and hanging over it. But here the valley itself is filled up by ridges broken into every variety of form, rent by torrents, united by bridges, spreading out into lawns, or running off into beckoning recesses, where the Dryades probably have their summer palaces. Then such a throwing about of trees of all shades and shapes, mountain meadows, bright dwellings and churches, the sweet and gracious signs of civilized life,—and all this splendid verdure, these Arcadian images lying in the heart of whatever nature has of sternest and most repelling, with the stormy Schallenen for its vestibule, and Suvaroff's battles for its recollections. The new road is very fine, and spoils the character of the valley less than could be expected.

Through the whole of this superb defile from the Urnerloch to Amstag, the Reuss dashes on, making a succession of cataracts for ever augmented by smaller ones of singular beauty and wildness, that rush down battling their way through all the impediments which rocks and woods can throw in it. They have not the breadth and volume of more pompous falls, but they have a character of

their own, and a very romantic one sometimes. The mighty cataracts, the roaring waters, are probably under the control of the genii of the floods,—cold, terrible people, who wear icicles for beards, and breathe water-spouts. But these are cascades, down which the queen of the Naiades herself might come sailing in a coach without discomposing the pearls in her hair, or taking her eyes from off the looking-glass which, according to ancient usage, the river nymphs are in the habit of holding in their right hand, or their left,—I forget which.

Amstag white and red as a new toy; changed our waggon for a char-à-banc, and were all the worse for so doing. A large clean looking inn, with a saloon of town dimensions. Mountains beautiful to Fluelen; the road runs through the flat grounds of the valley, but the side screens are exquisite, often presenting at one glance the symbols of every season; spring in the daisied meadows, summer in the wide-spreading chestnuts that swell up from them, and the first colouring of autumn in the rich beech woods, that, mounting still higher, melt into the back ground of pines which climb to the summit of the summer mountains, and seem to touch the eternal snow that forms the last degree of the scale. Altorf, the fair capital of Ury,

looked as black as a crow, though the houses are well whitened, and occasionally painted over with patriotic records,—indeed altogether beautified to the extent of their capabilities; but it looks as if it was down at the bottom of something—one does not exactly know what,—but something deeper and darker than its own romantic valley. Recognised the decapitating stool on its green platform, the usual pastoral preface to a Swiss town.

My brother recommends the inn at Fluelen; we did not enter it,—the place looked comfortless, and the population!—I think I have heard some mariner's story of a people who walked about, like St. Denis, with their heads under their arms; I have read too of certain sisters who had but one eye amongst them, which was handed about from one to another according to circumstances; but the rabble of Fluelen! the worse than Cyclops! cretins and half cretins, swollen and cadaverous children, goîtres—one larger than the unfortunate creature's head who carried it! the poor woman was in a dozen places in a minute, and pushed in and out through the crowd collected to see us embark, as if she would force us to notice her monstrous endowment, or the glittering necklace clasped round it. Another poor soul crawled after us, touching us every now and then with a half-dead

hand; she was a cretin, but had her shining beads as well as the rest. It was a melancholy and humiliating sight, enough so to have spoiled a paradise,—I thought.

Landed at Bouschs, and recreated our sight with the fair complexions and smiling eyes of the children,—a pleasant contrast to the monsters of Fluelen; the women too looked fair and mild, all stiffened up in stomachers made of something as hard as a board, and looking as if it was screwed upon them. Being Sunday, these detestable inventions were covered with rich brocade, and worn with an Indian-looking belt fastened round the waist, and the pretty bodkin with its enriched skimmer-shaped head, ornamenting the tresses. There is something quiet, even courtly in this dress, that, notwithstanding the horrors of the stomacher, is very pleasing. The long hair platted with narrow bands of white tape, and turned gracefully round and round the back of the head until it takes a very classical form, the full white sleeve confined at the elbow with a small bow, and all the gorgeous settings off of brocade and collar, of silver filigree and coloured stones, have a quaint richness about them that might not ill become the stately graces of Vandyke's cloth-of-gold dames and damsels. We distributed some batz amongst

the children, while the quiet mothers looked on in their picturesque uniformity, like Queen Esther's maids of honour in an ancient tapestry, or the twelve daughters of the baron in the old German story.

It began—(that is the story did)—something in this way. "The baron stood with his twelve daughters round him under the shade of a tall pear-tree; the sky was bright, and the air was warm, and the fruit which grew upon the tree had not its equal far or near. The baron's daughters stood all together in a comely row, each with one heron feather in her hair, and her silken vest of meadow green fastened with a small bird of wrought gold upon her breast. 'Alas! (said the eldest) the fruit hangs near to us, and yet we are not tall enough to gather it; Father, lift me up, I pray thee, that I may pluck some of the pears which hang upon that bough.' The Baron did so—" but I forget the rest. It was magical and very amusing, but the twelve daughters always stood together in a row, like my women of Bouschs, whose placid sameness brought back to my mind this long-forgotten story.

Supped and slept very comfortably at Stantz; Camacho's soup kettles, and moderate charges. Looked out of the window at the women's odd

caps, running back from their heads like enormous cock's combs, but this fashion seems declining, or confined to the ancients. I remember having once examined a splendid one at Lachen, eleven red roses and eleven blue, attached to a *pompon* of blue velvet superbly bound with gold. It cost three louis d'ors, the possessor told me; but she was mistress of the inn, and moreover wife to the Landamman, so took things with a high hand. The venerable masqueraders of Stantz are less magnificent, and content themselves with a simple ruffle.

Stantz is called a "joli bourg,"—which last word seems to be used here indiscriminately for a small town, or a large village; it is called cheerful too, and perhaps is so, but I can see nothing but its melancholy story. It comes before me everywhere,—that terrible ninth of September! The battle in the street, the massacre in the church,—young women slain fighting beside their brothers, mothers in defending their children! It was then that the virtuous Pestalozzi went into the streets, and, gathering together those whom the battle had made orphans, to the number (I believe) of eighty, began for their sakes an undertaking which might well be called a work of mercy. We looked in at the church, and saw the mark of the ball by which

the priest had been killed as he stood at the altar, and then the ossuary in a separate chapel. Too much dirt, and too much day-light, and too many trumpery ex-votos; more to displease than to interest or edify. The bones are ranged like bottles in a wine-cellar, and every thing that is possible done to divest death, not only of its character of awfulness, but even of that from which it is always painful to see it dissevered,—its garb of decency. A girl who was admiring the symmetrical arrangement of the skulls, took one out from its nook, thrust her fingers into the sockets where eyes once were, turned it round and round as if it had been a dress-cap until her curiosity was thoroughly satisfied, and then poked it back again into its place, as I have seen people thrust the skull of a horse into a hedge to fill up an aperture.

To-day we have lost our agreeable fellow-travellers. Five or six days passed in common perils and enjoyments, had brought us more together than if we had met in drawing-rooms for half a century. We were quite old friends at the moment of parting, and I hope may meet again with the same kind and cordial feelings.

Thought, as we left Stantz, of Engelberg, but the rain fell in torrents; thought too of the hermitage of St. Nicholas de Flue, in the beautiful valley

of the Melcthal, not far from Saxeln, but gave it up for the same reason. Two English ramblers, whom we met in the mountains equipped in doublets of black velvet like herbalizing Hamlets, told us, (and they seemed conversant in such matters), that the valley of Engelberg was first rate, sublime in itself, and having an abbey of Benedictines with spire and turret, carillon and angelus, to help out the scenery. The monks are reputed learned, courteous, and benevolent; strangers are kindly received within their convent, which possesses an extensive library, the only one in the canton of Unterwalden. All the marks here of the forest cantons,—houses covered with bits of wood shaped like the scales of a fish, painted walls, gilt churchyards, holidays, and stewed prunes,—and more, something antique, something that breathes of the old heroes, the patriot peasants who intimidated tyranny by that which alone can effectually intimidate it,—the intense love of liberty, universal in its diffusion, and wise in its means of action.

The old cross-bow is (I am told) still handled, though now pacifically, and every farm-house orchard has its target; but the rifle is the favourite exercise. Better tacticians may master the mountaineers when they can get them down into the plains, but in the clefts and gorges of the hills, the

rifle in their sure hands tells tremendously. A prodigious apple-harvest, every tree round and smirking; twice as much fruit as leaves, just like the apple tree in the middle of an old-fashioned tent-stitch screen, with Eve at one side and the serpent at the other, and lest the subject should be mistaken, every apple blood red, and as large as a pomegranate. A-propos to apples,—Tell's (they say now) is at least apocryphal; no matter, he was an undoubted shot, at all events, and the story will answer just as well for the purposes of opera decoration, as if it were a true bill.

From Stantz the country cold and sleepy. At Kerns it begins to warm again into beauty. A chateau was pointed out to us near Sarnen, just such a thing as generally fills up the end of a show box,—a row of desperate trees, and two wings capped like our vile Kremlin, and painted a stormy red. The churches here are too fine, one wonders at the prodigality of marble and gilding; but the heart warms to the village-church, with its rustic porch and simple associations. The tomb of St. Nicholas de Flue, at Saxeln, yields only to the molten gold of the canonized Borromeo;* such fine things are too ostentatious both for the

* In the Duomo of Milan.

country and the people. Piety is a simple and natural feeling, its organ is prayer not pomp. I speak of the piety of the heart, not of the senses; and for the heart there is nothing between the dim majesty of the gothic and the simplicity of the village church. Even St. Peter's—the glorious! the beautiful! has too much daylight splendour, too much drawing-room gorgeousness; what then must be the effect produced on the mind by the flutter and tawdriness of gold leaf, and the crowding of painted images, as offensive—though in a different way—as our town chapels, with their rows of paid and ticketed benches.

God is in the heavens, in the clouds, in the storm; if we could worship him in the open air at the great altar, it would be best; but as we cannot do so at all seasons, the architecture which imitates the interlacing branches of high trees, and whose darkness images the sacred mysteries into which we are not permitted to penetrate, is, after nature's, the most impressive temple; and next to that, the simple structure that makes no claim upon eye or mind, where nothing comes to thrust its gilt littleness between us and that image which we wish to seek in earnestness.

Three blooming lasses passed us on the road to Sarnen; one was a beauty as far as face went,

but a stiff high-shouldered figure. A brocaded stomacher, a dash of hair-powder, and a colour like vermilion, gave her the air of a portrait of Mignard's, or one of Boucher's carmine shepherdesses. Yet she was really and strikingly handsome; our guide called her Marie Zimmerman, and said that she was a peasant from the neighbourhood of Stantz, where such beauties (he insinuated) were as common as blackberries.

Lake of Sarnen out of looks; never thought it so beautiful as Lungern, but the run of hills to the right is exquisite; they are indeed "gently swelling hills." I suspect that the genius of the woods must have glided under their surface, making a passage with its wings. A sweet little pass the Kayserstouhl; and Lungern again in all the glory of fairy-land, its deep green waters, and the trees whose long branches dip into the pure wave caressingly, looked like an exquisite enamel, altogether just such a thing as a virtuoso might covet, to fold up like a screen and run away with. Quite ashamed of my second thoughts,* so looked back upon the descent of the Brunig when we had mounted up to the best point, that I might retract, if necessary, in that quarter also. It was beautiful, and re-

* Vide vol. i. page 228.

deemed itself as Lungern had done. Fine rocks, coeval pines, and clouds and sunshine. Light is the physiognomy of scenery; a landscape is like a regular set of features, both may be good, but neither speak, unless the light of nature or of the mind brighten on them.

I have never remarked the maple in England, though I know that shepherds make cups and hermits dishes of it, and that it is an article of positive necessity in all pastoral catalogues. In Switzerland it is often magnificent: there are some superb specimens in the upper part of the valley of Lauterbrunnen and a few charming ones on the Brunig; its fawn-coloured bark is almost as beautiful as the silver gray of the beech. Our guide, Melchior—a *vacher* of the valley of Sarnen—sang for us delightfully, as we jogged along over the mountain. His notes were wild and copious like the rich jugging of the nightingale, such a flexible larynx,—and a double one too,—with the side-pocket voice which seems to run up close by the other one. I don't understand this contrivance, but all the highly gifted *ranz des vaches* singers possess the knack of conveying a double sound, in a very unaccountable way.

Montesquieu was right: the monotony of contrasts becomes at the long run as fatiguing as that

of symmetry. The power of contrast consists in the shock, or charm, of opposition, and the excitement of surprise; but when its effects are too regularly repeated, they weary like the voice of an echo, which at first astonishes and delights, but soon loses its charm when we become aware of its unfailing return. It seems ungrateful to find fault with nature in this divine country, but the oppositions of colouring (for instance) fatigue like sameness, and in the end become so. I cover my face while I say that the green dazzle of the lawns, and the white dazzle of the snows, and the black garb of the pines,——but I am ashamed to go on.—It is that good-for-nothing gossip human nature that loves to find fault, and, if there be but a speck in the sun will swear it is a beam; that holds my pen, so I shall put my nightcap on, and go to sleep to get rid of her.

To sleep at Meyringhen was no particular luxury formerly, but now white mattresses, and sofas, and window curtains report progress very invitingly. Refinement gains ground in the mountains; the old caravanseras have cast their skins, and come out inns that promise well without, and "better expectation" within. I do not think that the licentiate Sedillo himself would have despised the arrangement of certain dishes of which we partook a few days since

at Lauterbrunnen, nor the most squeamish delicacy refuse a note of approbation to the general neatness of the Oberland inns. I know all this may be called bad taste, town feeling, &c. &c. and certainly the mountain piggery, with its romantic name of chalet, sounds more pastoral than the Red Lion, or the Three Crowns; but the closeness, dirt, and consequent annoyances of the one, must be seen or thoroughly imagined, before the fresh air, white curtains, and perfect cleanliness of the others can be fairly appreciated. Every one knows that a Swiss cottage is built of wood, that its roof is covered with wooden tiles kept tight by large stones, and its front decorated with rude paintings and inscriptions in good or bad German. But they do not always know that the *divine chalet* which makes such a pretty white toy, is usually a wretched hovel, in which the poor shepherd can hardly find shelter from the inclemency of his capricious skies. The continual trampling of the cattle soon converts the ground about it into deep mire, through which the lover of pastoral interiors must wade ankle deep, and if all the plagues of Egypt are not found within, some at least are sure to be there. Last night a young man who supped in the neighbourhood of our tea table, gave himself the most unimaginable airs. Looked for his

name in the book, and fancied it was the Marquis of A——. Regretted that a young Englishman of high rank should play off like a disguised courier, but found out my mistake at the next inn.

All the guardians of the Lac de Brientz profusely powdered with snow in their upper regions, heavy mist girdling them round, and black pines peering through it, and following one after the other like mutes at a funeral along the steep edges, just what I should fancy might be the effect of a second-sight interment in the sky. A rock, too, peeped out in the form of a war-horse, clinging to a cloud, and mounting upwards,—it was perhaps Pegasus, I did not examine closely.

Soft and silvery approach to Thoun, like fancy scenery,—no compliment perhaps. Again at Berne. L—— asked at dinner for the vin de St. George, "Monsieur, (said the waiter) nous n'avons pas St. George, mais je peux vous donner St. Joseph." There was no joke meant.

"Few of any sort, and none of name" at Berne. Left it this morning. Yesterday at dinner a group of French women of a little real, and much pretended fashion, exercised their *esprit moqueur* at the expense of both good nature and politeness. French women are sometimes fond of this unamiable species of raillery, which interrupts the effects

of their charms oftener and more unpleasantly than they are aware of. Ridicule is their pocket pistol, and they have always a finger on the trigger; yet they are indulgent to each other and rarely censorious. But this disagreeable propensity often gives an unpleasant harshness to their manners, and checks that graceful union of the *douce et gai*, which they justly consider as the most engaging of feminine attractions.

Thursday.—A damp bed at a country inn, but a cream tart worthy of Bedreddin Hassan. Set off for Lucerne by one of those cobweb mornings so common in Switzerland; the peasant's provision of umbrellas shows what he expects; be the sun ever so bright, the umbrella always keeps its place under the arm. Missed our road, and as we dragged along through a swamp, or something very like it, the carillon of a convent came towards us dancingly, and soon after the lordly abbey of St. Urbain rose before us with dressed meadows and low hills spread over with woods thrown about it, and no doubt a noble,—perhaps princely abbot; arrogant of course, (or there is no truth in poetry) and probably cruel,—but this we could not stop to inquire.

These Bernardines of St. Urbain have the key of a pleasanter country than that through which we

passed to get at them; their lands have a fat, home look, fertile enclosures, fine single trees, and untethered cattle,—agreeable, but not striking. Not much feature in the landscape to-day; the historical lake of Sempach very poor as to scenery,—water, wood, and hill, it is true, but meagrely put together with a straight rigid outline. A true Swiss heart warms at the sight of Sempach, sees banners in the air and winged victories, and remembers the great days of its country. But to cold critical eyes that have no hearts in them, it is poor and unattaching, rather a break down than a help to the fancy.

Stopped to let the sun go by at a village inn,—I forget the name; the outside amazingly gay, just fresh done with fishes' scales, and glittering like a dying dolphin.* Muslin draperies and the loves of Atala and Chactas, but nothing to eat. Being Friday, it was deemed unorthodox not only to taste meat, but to have it in the house; the curate would not permit even a flitch of bacon, or the time-immemorial resource of the old hen. We spoke of fish, but the hostess turned a deaf ear to us. In the country inns here a pike, or a trout, or at least some unhappy small fry, kept—what is

* Vide Childe Harold.

called—*alive*, in a reservoir, are usually to be had; but no such manna in this wilderness. St. Anthony himself could not have conjured up a minnow. The church is not always so exacting; the hospitable monks of St. Bernard, who qualify for a better world by acts of usefulness and charity, have no qualms about "fish dressed twenty ways, and mushrooms dressed twenty ways, and vegetables dressed twenty ways,"—as a simple soul whom we met with in the mountains, and in whose life a visit to the worthy brotherhood had made an epoch, told me. This poor man went by the name of the *Grand Bernard;* his first question to every stranger was, "Sir, (or Ma'am) have you crossed the Grand Bernard?—excellent people, the monks; famous wine, Sir; just bottled off two hundred dozen; always happy to see agreeable people,"—and I am not quite sure,—though his grateful effusions became a standing joke,—that some amateurs of the "muscat adorable" were not tempted to visit the kind Bernardines by his report of their cellar.

Long before we reached Lucerne night had fallen upon it, so we lost the Reuss and its magnificent neighbourhood. Few things even amongst the finest are better than this approach to Lucerne, descending with the mountains full in view, and

then following the windings of the clear river that sweeps along between rich banks, dotted with habitations hanging over the airy cliffs, and darkened by forests that, if they have ever heard of an axe, at least say nothing about it. At the issue of this beautiful defile, Lucerne stretches out its towers and battlements, assuming an antique and feudal bearing, which it does not sustain quite so nobly on a nearer approach. But the order of nobility whose patent is as old as the creation always sustains itself with honour, and the proud mountain screen which stretches from the Pilate to the Righi and closes up this fine avenue, belongs to the highest class of nature's aristocracy. I have seen all this often, but do not the less regret being too late for its beauty now.

Nothing so dismal as Lucerne after eight or nine at night; its silent streets feebly lighted by the obscure glimmer of a few lamps, separated from each other by long dark intervals, have a most criminal aspect. When the solitary lamp turns its dull glare upon a house, it is sure to be all shut up, and to look like a dead wall. No lights visible, no movement, no sound, except that one which is a thousand times more dismal than profound silence, —the deep rushing of the river. A dark river sweeping by deserted streets and silent houses, with

that eternal voice that has been heard since the birth of time and will be heard for ever, is a gloomy night-piece.

And how does Lucerne look by day-light? wet and lowering, as it always has done when I have seen it, and stirless as the petrified city in the Arabian Nights. And yet there are good houses here, and apparently no empty ones; no decayed or half dismantled dwellings, as in the mouldering towns of Italy, no desolate mansion with the fox looking out of the window and the bat in the empty halls. The people are here, and yet the streets look as if the trumpet had just sounded the approach of the Lady Godiva.

Sometimes a begging friar shifts the scene a little, or a Cordelier taps at a door with the pious air of Ambroise de Lamela, or the Nuncio passes with his stockings of aristocratical purple, true Tyrian dye, and worn accordingly; or two or three old crones, octogenarians perhaps, walk gravely by, muffled to the throats, with bare heads, and gray locks lightly powdered, looking very like (beaks excepted, and that not always) the old vultures, whose bare throats seem to start out from a cloak of feathers.

Sometimes the prisoners clanking their chains and enclosed in collars of iron diffuse a darker

shade of gloom; they sweep the streets, and salute the people civilly, or with an air of mockery, as if they would like—only being just then busy—to step aside and strangle them. There are two convents here, both of the order of Capuchins,—one for men, the other for women,—and a remnant of Cordeliers, who are not allowed to increase their numbers, as on the extinction of the present community the convent will be suppressed. Our young people were exceedingly anxious to know of what sort of stuff a nun was composed, especially a handsome one, and the beauty of some of the Capucines of Lucerne, had left a bright track on the limited horizon of which they were once the stars; but unluckily the Nuncio is impracticable, and ruffles his crest at the approach of even such harmless petitioners, and as not a mouse can scratch its way to the holy house without the sign-manual of "l'homme cardinalable," they are obliged to fold up their curiosity and lay it by for a future occasion.

After all, the everlasting veil is but a melancholy sight: I always think with extreme pity of nuns, and of that hasty vow that answers thoughtlessly for the long, long future, that resigns all in the name of hopes, affections, passions, which are no party to the contract, and may hereafter rise in their strength against it. The species of enthusiasm which sends

the young and imaginative to a cloister, is often nothing more than an exertion of the mind to fill up a void left by the extinction of stronger emotions, an effort to work a new spring against the sorrowful inanition of the heart, or perhaps against its dangerous recollections. But even should its source be freer from earth's mixture, how can it sustain itself? not certainly by the exacted prayer or stated ceremony, whose nothingness is visible to the eye that looks behind the curtain: and if it should subside,—O how heavily may the vows pronounced at eighteen sit on the heart at five-and-twenty!

Approached by the lake, Lucerne looks like a Chinese screen spread open. A long white rampart slides down obliquely to the water, with six or eight minaret-looking towers upon it; beside it a small green hill stands up sprucely, and beneath is a church whose belfries want only a jingling fringe to be positive pagodas. Foreground, as usual, of blue or green water with an edging of verdigrise fields, flocks of water fowls, and a Chinese proportion of umbrella bridges. What these bridges look upon is another affair, and a very different one as to brilliancy. All that runs round Lucerne or goes off from it, is first rate; the streets, it is true, are dark and narrow, but they

are so near to nature, and that nature is so exquisite!

When music, "heavenly maid," as she used to be called formerly, threw her mantle over Germany, fastening it down at one corner with her immortal seal so that no other nation could run away with it, its proportions were so ample, that the little states which hang about the great one and speak its language, could catch hold of the hem and draw it over them, as those delicious children Paul and Virginia did the "jupon bouffant." From the contact of this magical hem, the talents of Winterthour, of Zurich, of Lucerne, &c. — catch inspiration, and thence come the musical societies and amateur concerts which surprise strangers, who expect to hear the squeaking fiddles and shrill penny trumpets of a country band. Last night some Italian strollers undertook L'Italiana in Algieri. Unfortunate Rossini! and still more unfortunate orchestra! fine-eared amateurs, who must have felt like Hogarth's mad musician while the yell was up. Never was noise so loud, yet so voiceless; a dozen kettle-drums would have been a benediction. The poor creature who called herself Prima Donna, and moreover "Artiste de l'Académie de Bologna," had the Italian tendency to beauty, a fine formed mouth

opening squarely, and something very delicate and pencilled about the upper part of the face,* but moving like a tumbler in a sack, or Mazurier when preparing to roll up his legs and make a bolster of them. As for the unhappy Roxana, she was a May-sweep from turban to buskin,—indeed the Dey and his courtiers had altogether quite the tone of that accomplished fraternity. A dirty woman, with an infant in her arms, dropped down through a trap in front of the stage to act as prompter to the fair inmates of the Numidian harem, but re-appeared every now and then above ground when her services could be dispensed with. The theatre was worthy of the actors, a sort of loft with an Augean smell; stage (at a rough guess) twelve to fifteen feet wide; striped ticken drop-scene, with a drapery of red paper elaborately festooned clinging to it, and a prudent diffusion of tallow candles. Discussed the Righi at tea, and decided on attacking it to-morrow.

* I have since met this person in other circumstances and in a room, when her beauty quite surprised me.

CHAPTER IV.

ASCENT OF THE RIGHI — SNOW MOUNTAINS — RECEIPT TO MAKE TEA — A NURSERY TALE — THE CALLING-UP — SUN-RISE — OUR LADY OF THE SNOW — THE RIGHI — DESCENT BY WEGGIS — MOUNTAIN SUPERSTITIONS — DOMINICK OF THE CAVE — PASTORAL CHARACTER OF SWITZERLAND — AGAIN AT LUCERNE — VIEW FROM MY WINDOW — FETE DAYS — CLERICAL GAIETIES — CHRISTIAN TOLERANCE.

THURSDAY.—Righi-Coulm. A tough ascent today from Kussnacht, and now and then a bit that sent our horses pawing upwards, like Napoleon's iron charger in, I forget whose, fancy-piece of the passage of the Mont St. Bernard. Some danger and prodigious beauty,—such fine snatches through the trees of gleaming lakes and gentle distant valleys, and such a leaving behind of the heavy earth and its incumbrances. From the path immediately under the Coulm, the look-up is very imposing; something in the air, detached and

inaccessible, seems to bar the way, and as we turn off to the right to scale its practicable point, it almost seems to us as if we were going to storm an ogre in his castle. I hope we shall only find his wife at home; for according to the historical D'Aunoy, the mates of these ungentle birds have not always such sharp beaks as their voracious males.

This mountain is so entirely isolated, that with a little scraping round to make it inaccessible, (a very little would do), it might serve admirably for the deeds of fairie;—"and in the middle of many lakes rose up a mountain, with its head in the clouds and its feet in the waters." One touch of a wand would arrange matters, and set a damsel asleep on a snug perch between earth and heaven for five or six hundred years, without the chance of a visit from anything more material than a cloud, or a sunbeam.

As we mounted upwards all the phenomena of mist attended us, producing amongst many singular effects, one that was peculiarly striking. A thick vapour curled round the edge of a lake, and forming a frame of clouds, gave it the appearance of a mirror hung up in the sky. Fine amber streaking behind the Pilate, and when that died away, a kind of premature twilight,—very sombre and poetical.

The view from the Righi, like the heroine's beauty in an old-fashioned romance, baffles all description; first, because of its extent and map-like surface, and next, because description signifies nothing. Yet one must talk with one's paper, that one may talk afterwards with one's recollections. At this moment it has a character of solemnity approaching to gloom, which perhaps under brighter skies may not belong to it. But in these high regions the physiognomy of nature is usually melancholy; the mind commerces with the sky, with which it seems in neighbourhood, and the eye looks out upon the world now far below, as it does from the deck of a vessel upon the ocean which surrounds it, but with which it has no connecting feeling.

But still it is a glorious panorama, though the best and most characteristic part of it is that to which the extension implied by the word panorama least belongs. I should have said the best to *my* fancy; for many may prefer (and do) the unbounded range which the eye takes in from the east to the north-west, to the magnificent mountain chain which limits the horizon on the opposite side. "All these things will I give thee" instantly flashed upon my mind, when I looked from the platform of the Coulm on the towns and villages,

lakes and forests, spread out beneath. I wonder has it ever occurred to any one that this might be "the exceeding high mountain." I dare say it has, the idea seems so natural. They have a tradition here, which gives a grave to the troubled spirit of Pilate in the lake on the top of his namesake mountain; this boundless view and infinity of objects seem to suggest another.

After all, lakes so distant as to look like pools, some almost like water spilt upon the earth, countries faintly indicated like spots on the horizon, have but little interest. Some one says, "Look towards the north; do you see a streak of light?" "No."—"Look again,—a little more in that direction."—"Ah, I think I see it now."—"That is the lake of Zurich; and now turn a little more to the left, where you see the dark line, that is Suabia; and farther round are the mountains of the Vosges; you cannot see them now, but when the atmosphere is very pure and the sky without a cloud, you can make out something of their outline." Then there is a hint of the Dôle, and a whisper of the Danube, and so it goes on until you expect to hear that with a good glass you may tell the hour on the town-clock of Strasburg. All this is too indefinite to satisfy the eye and too map-like to affect the imagination; it is the geographer's and not the

poet's distance. And yet there is great breadth and grandeur in it, and something fine and solemn in the still extent from which no sound comes up, no sight of movement,—all fixed and breathless, as if the wide wings of the angel of death were sweeping over it. The eye too dominates finely, but soon grows weary from the stretch, and returns with delight to the high Alps and the gleaming lake of Lucerne.

Talking of Alps, I remember when a mountain was a mountain with me, no matter whether round, or square, or pointed; but now I compare, and grow critical, and no longer condescend to look at great clumsy-headed straight-lined monsters, merely because they are so many thousand feet above the level of the sea. Intimacy with perfection breeds daintiness, and now even the snow mountains will not always go down. At first I bowed reverentially before them, and homaged their purity; but I soon found out that, like other things, they had their every-day moments, and so refused to notice any but the magnificent ones. Pronounced the twilight white, too cold and ghastly, and the broad noonday glare, when the sky was blue-blue and the outline nakedly detached, too hard, with something of sugar or salt about it that I could not well get over. It is when the pale moonbeams

sleep upon the paler snow, or the yellow sun sets upon it, or the bright rose-colour hue, which succeeds the glow of sunshine, spreads like a river of light over its broad masses, that the effect is at once sublime and touching; but it is so with all mountains, they have their best looks and their bad ones, as the sun lightens or the clouds darken on them,—so no offence to their virgin majesties. One word more. The spectral aspect of the snow mountains is fearful; my first impression was certainly that of terror, my imagination worked awfully. We may create a grand and desolate image in our minds, and look upon it calmly; but the real presence of things so wonderful is appalling.

The French fought here, on the top of the Coulm, and ravaged the country beneath. In the pagan times, when the heavens were sometimes accessible, they would have battled hard for Olympus, and perhaps have deposed Jupiter as if he had been a German Margrave. As it is, wherever a goat could poise its hoof, they found good fighting ground; every spot has been a scene of action, but all have long since returned within the dominion of nature, except the Rossberg; that alone looks red, and sad, and seared, as if its fall had taken place only yesterday.* We see it here below the eastern ex-

* Vide vol i. page 282.

tremity of the platform, extending its mournful influence over the sweet lake of Lowertz and the graceful scenery in its neighbourhood, and saddening their gentle beauty.

> "Before the starry threshold of Jove's court
> My mansion is."

and really one has a very detached sort of feeling here, as if not quite sure that the earth were underneath one. However, we stroll about, buy rock-crystal as pure and nearly as bright as diamonds, and forget that some people think that the Righi, on which we are making ourselves comfortable, will probably one day or other slide into the lake. Tea with fewer cowslips in it than usual. In these distant regions the receipt to make tea is as follows:—To three ounces of tea-dust add half a pound of cowslip-flowers, and an equal quantity of any aromatic herb which happens to be at hand; dry, and mix the whole carefully together. When thus prepared, take a small quantity of the mixture, let it infuse gently in warm water, then pour it into any vessel that happens to be at hand, sweeten with beet-root sugar, and add goats' milk to the taste.

When the winter winds blow, how the witches must sweep by here on broomsticks: Hecate cal-

ling, and Paddock answering, and all carousing drearily as they do in Retzsch's outlines. The clouds run wild, and as they divide into misshapen forms and scurry off with the winds in their ragged pennants, they look like wizards' messengers. I have been gazing on them from the sentry-box porch, which takes the door of this creaking contrivance under its protection, and now I have turned in to drink tea, and make rhymes out of the fancies which the wild nature and wild sky around and above engender.

Now that my rhymes are made, I am at a loss what to call them, but as they have a moral, though it may be a little veiled, I think I may venture to give them the imposing title of—*An Instructive Nursery Tale;* to which I may possibly hereafter add, *composed on the Summit of the Righi*, by way of helping them out with the moonshiny air which becomes such tales of mystery.

AN INSTRUCTIVE NURSERY TALE.

Sing to me sleeping, sing to me waking,
Sing to me sweetly the lone lady's song;
Tell me of elf streams, charms, and of moonbeams,
Tell of the wizard not half a span long.

Tell what was done by the Grenada nun,
Who murder'd the youth that had fancied her fair;
Tell how the race in the churchyard was won,
While the leather-wing'd bats sail'd about in the air.

Tell of the pale bride that sits by the well side,
And points to the forest with cold skinny hand;
Tell of the lights that below in the dell glide,
Struck from the black hunter's fiery brand.

Tell while the stars glow, tell e'er the cocks crow,
Tell of the goblins that gibber and mow;
Tell how they shook their red shrouds at the wild doe,
And the seven-tongu'd blood-hounds!—O tell it me now.

O, I have forgot it; let's see,—no, that's not it.
But stay, I've another that with it may cope,—
But first to thy bed,—from a friar I got it,
A bare-footed friar with sandal and rope.

The feast it was cheery, the monk he was merry,
He quitted his host with a dance in his eye;
The boat floated light on the edge of the ferry,
But no one was there—save a woman—to ply.

He laugh'd in his glee, such a rower to see,
But nor pilot nor hand came to steer or to paddle;
"Holloa to the ferry!—come quickly!" cried he,
And the woman sprang in, like a knight in the saddle.

On the same eve, I ween, the boat it was seen,
When the stars were dim and the tempest wailing,
Aloft in the clouds, with the monk in the shrouds,
And the deadly woman beside it sailing.

But never again in St. Dominick's glen,
Did friar or layman the merry monk see;
But oft when the shadows hung over the fell,
Above in the air in his boat was he.

And they knew the swell of the dead man's knell,
And they knew the laugh of his ghostly rower;
And shout and cry, were heard in the sky,——
O that's fine! good gossip, pray tell it once more.

In the structure of rhymes which treat of supernatural things, two or three feet more or less make no difference, no more than in the stature of a giant. It signifies little whether he be twenty feet high, or thirty, or sometimes twenty and sometimes thirty, provided he does not limp, which I fear my mountain witchcraft does most wofully.

The bouquet of Righi splendour, is the sunrise; every rambler in Switzerland runs up to look at it. When the first red streaks appear, a slip-shod cowherd—no connexion whatever with the old firm of Endymion and Co.—blows his horn lustily, and sets the inmates of the house, and indeed the house itself, in motion. All start up, for the thin mattresses are no incentives to laziness; then comes a general creaking of bedsteads, and a bursting of doors, and huddling on of cloaks to hide the scanty petticoat and half-laced corset,

and a muster of sleepy faces and jaws opening galvanically. We were up at the first blast, and down on the platform before the golden eye was half open; *ourself* exceeding stately, in a mantle of black satin, like Prince Memnon's sister; M—— with a gaiter on one leg, and a stocking on the other; and all with nightcaps pulled over our eyes, and bonnets stuck on the top of them. A score of students, and a jesuit from Fribourg with a squad of younkers in training for the political priesthood, absolved by the urgency of the moment from the necessity of soap and water, already decorated the platform, and all turned like Ghebers to the east. We waited a few minutes while the sky warmed slowly, and then another blast from the cowherd's horn announced the present deity.

It came,—not gloriously, but with a light that one could gaze on without borrowing eyes from the eagle. There were few clouds and no vapours, and yet little glow of colouring, perhaps for that very reason,—perhaps there were not clouds enough to diffuse and vary the light which was all one pale monotonous saffron. "Where (said I inwardly) is the high glory? where is the pomp of nature? where are the festal lights of the morning?"—and so I went on quite to myself, like the Prince of Denmark, but it was all flat and dis-

appointing; one half of the panorama looked cold and gray, the other not like glory, but its pale reflection. The shadows had no depth, the light no splendour, nothing but the unsatisfactory middle tint that chills like mental mediocrity. This is the second imperfect sun-rise that I have looked upon from the Righi. When the great scene-shifter is in his mood of magnificence, it must be supreme; here in the desert, in the silence and infinity of nature, it would seem like the moment of creation.

Of all idolatries, that of sun-worship is certainly the most natural; it seems almost impossible that an untaught mind should behold the splendour and feel the warmth of this glorious orb, should glow and look about in its light, and feel the chill and darkness that succeed to its disappearance, without believing it a god. The wonder is, that with this beautiful mystery shining above them, men should carve for themselves dropsical and distorted images, and then fall down before the hideous workmanship of their own hands; or build temples to the serpent, and offer up their children to the gaping crocodile.

The good people here, living in the constant presence of an austere and threatening nature, pray to "Our Lady of the Snow" in a chapel consecrated

to her worship down in a green hollow below the Coulm. Her benign image—gifted of course with miraculous powers—is constantly waited upon by the brothers of an adjoining convent, three of whom remain there all the winter. It is rare that their solitude is cheered even by the visit of a shepherd. Sometimes the master of one of the neighbouring inns fastens on his *crampons* and grapples his way up from his winter nest at Kussnacht, to see if the snow has overwhelmed his summer one in the clouds, or the winds flown away with it, as gentler messengers did with Loretto. But usually the dark months are passed in loneliness: no footsteps break in upon their pious seclusion until the sun peeps out again, and sends the devout and simple-minded villagers to offer up their prayers and thanksgivings at the shrine of the pure lady, whose mercy has turned aside the avalanche and traced the path through the white desert.

Here again is the worship of the uninstructed heart, that sees in the rude effigy of "Our Lady of the Snow" the image of a woman made in its own nature, a mother full of grief, one whose purity had found favour in the sight of God, and whose name is blessed amongst women. All that comes from the heart is understood by it, and the expression of a feeling the sincerity of which

cannot be doubted, has always—if its base be kindliness—something tender and touching in it.

When we first visited the Righi, the spectacle which presented itself from its summit was one of the most extraordinary that could be witnessed. Beneath us lay a vast ocean of mist, white and dense, which covered the face of the plains and filled up the deep valleys, effacing all traces of the green world that was spread out beneath it; except where, rising above this waveless sea, appeared the melancholy Pilate, or the double-forked Mythen, and here and there a solitary peak or rugged buttress rising like a lonely island from its bosom. Southwards stretched a wild shore of Alps gorgeously illuminated, and farther off the dark mountains of Ury, retreating in shadowy perspecti[ve] along the deep and (as it then appeared) flood[ed] valley of the Reuss. All else, as far as the e[ye] could reach, was a boundless blank, a wan a[nd] shoreless ocean to the visual sense, perfectly r[e]alizing the travellers' tales of the northern [ice] regions. On all this the sun was setting glori[ously] and as it sunk, a temple, not made by han[ds] formed of golden clouds, seemed to enclose [it].

Looking down upon this scene, it was [hard] to be believed that under that wide still[ness] fields and cities, and men and movemen[t]

as the crew of some shipwrecked vessel might be supposed to do who had gained a rock of refuge or like the family of Noah watching from the summit of Mount Ararat the slow return of their winged messenger. What a magnificent deluge-scene this would have made, could it have been transferred to canvass with its living light about it, —the point of time that when the waters had begun to subside, and the sun had come again to gladden the earth! Neither house or spire, or field or living thing, or track or indication of man was visible; but the summits of the mountains were unveiled, as if testifying that "the fountains of the deep, and the windows of heaven were stopped." For two whole days and part of a third, is singular appearance continued; we then des-nded in despair, and after passing for upwards of eague through a solid mass of fog, emerged sud-nly into warmth and brightness.

Those who suspect their own courage or their e's steadiness should ascend and descend by gis, certainly the safest and perhaps the most liately beautiful of any of the paths which the summit of the mountain. Three quar- a league between Righistaffel and Weg- close bosom of some romantic rocks, are cold baths, (Kalt-bad), where invalids

are cured, in the oddest way possible, of intermittent fevers, rheumatism, chronic and acute, and many other maladies of the active as well as languid kind. The process of immersion is performed in the usual way; but the cure depends, not only on the patient's bathing with his clothes on, but letting them dry upon his back.—I should think it was sure to be radical.

These baths are also called Schwesterborn, or Fountain of the Sisters, from a tradition that three fair sisters flying from the pursuit of a wicked bailiff (Austrian of course) took refuge within the hollow of these rocks, where they ended their days, and where miracles are still performed in their name, as the shepherds who abide in the fields and the pilgrims who visit the holy places (which are many) on this mountain, can and do willingly attest. A darker shade of superstition hangs upon the island of Schawnau, on the lake of Lowertz. On this island is a castle, or its ruins, and once a year cries are heard to issue from it, and suddenly the ghost of another bailiff is seen to pass, chased by the vengeful spirit of a pale girl, bearing a blazing torch and shrieking wildly. At first he eludes her swiftness, but at length she gains upon him and forces him into the lake, where he sinks with doleful struggles; and as the waves close

over the condemned, the shores ring with fearful and unearthly yellings.

The traditions of mountain countries are generally sombre or terrific. If a spring bubbles up in a solitary spot, it generally marks the scene of some mystical or melancholy story. If a bird sails over a high peak, you will hear how the Lammergeyer descends upon the hunter, and griping him with its iron talons, forces him from his precarious hold into the invisible depths below, where they are lost together; or you will be told of the Vultures, who when the cry of war is heard in the mountains, come in troops that darken the air, and hover over the field of battle until its silence invites them to their horrible banquet. If there is a cavern in a rock, it is sure to have had a dragon for its inhabitant, who realized in its time the legend of Schiller, and even improved upon it, for I have heard of one—a gallant and sagacious dragon, probably with scales of emerald and a carbuncle eye, who was fond of conducting young maidens to his green retreats; how he treated them I know not, as they never returned to tell their story. In default of a dragon, a mysterious figure, white and colossal, is always at hand: such was the awful Dominick of the Pilate, who had been seen for ages through a crevice in his (supposed) inacces-

sible cavern, leaning on the eternal table, and extending the eternal hand towards its entrance. Some thought it was a giant, others believed it a magician, or a ghost, or perhaps Pilate himself, the rejected of God and man! At length, one of that bold band who pursue the "dreadful trade" of chamois-hunting, and perform in the exercise of their desperate calling deeds which might make the stoutest captain quail, dropped down into the cave, and reduced the mystery to a huge mass of white stone, to which chance had given something of the form of a man, enough at least for distant illusion.

The perils of hunters is a subject which might be swelled into a volume in this land of chamois. Every perch in the air suggests the recollection of all that is done and suffered by those fearless enthusiasts; limbs and life lavished, hardships almost beyond the endurance of the toughest fibres sought for as if they were down beds and ambrosia, and the gain so trifling that the worst-paid labour produces better interest.—But persecution has thinned the race of chamois, and those fleet and beautiful creatures are now rarely seen.

The Righi serves as a sort of watering-place to Lucerne; many persons come from thence, as well

as from Zurich, to inhale the aromatic air of the mountain, drink goats' milk, and grow passionate about sunbeams. Others to practise courtesies, and vary the canvass of provincial life with a little foreign embroidery. Every day sends in fresh groupes to occupy the holes and corners of the Coulm and the Staffel; English, Germans, Russians, French, (but of these the fewest) are jostled together under circumstances that hasten the growth of intimacy with the rapidity of quick-lime. Notwithstanding this eternal coming and going, this running up of one party and down of another, the glens and pastures of the Righi preserve their pastoral character inviolate; even their look of loneliness has not left them. If we but turn away from the green platform where the joyous pilgrims congregate, and cast our eyes over the rich pastures which cover its swelling sides, or look into its deep green valleys, we may be tempted to exclaim, "Where are the tents and the camels?"—indeed there is no country which brings the far-off scenes and simple images of patriarchal life out of the keep of time, as Switzerland does. A shepherd-boy lies along the point of a rock, and blows through a pipe whose rude shape and sound might have suited the early ages of the world, when the

wealth of kings was in their flocks and herds; an ancient man sits on a broad stone under the shadow of a hill, and gathers together his cattle from the sides of the mountain,—he may be the servant of Jacob or of Laban, and the young shepherd may be Joseph or one of his brethren, and the plains below us may be the plains of Mamre, and the hills "the mountains east of Bethel,"—at least for any thing that appears to destroy the illusion.

I am not sure, however, as to the fêtes; the character of the patriarchal times as it is handed down to us in the Scriptures, is seriousness; there is no mention of mirth. We cannot picture to ourselves Rachael or Rebecca, or yet the bondwoman indulging in a horse-laugh, as the blowzy nymphs here are wont to do, as they row cheerily across the lake on Saint John's day, to celebrate the shepherds' festival, or clamber up the mountain all hot and puffy, like an *omelette souflée*, to join in the rustic gambols and hold jubilee in honour of Saint Mary Magdalen, or Our Lady of the Snow.

How have we gossiped about Alp and Appenine, and dreamt dreams, and called chance certainty, and reckoned upon the future as if we had a private understanding with fate! never in our weak shortsightedness catching even a glimpse of a

Lucerne winter behind the mirage. No chance now of the blue heaven, or the broad lakes or orange groves of Italy, and all the chances of being frost-nipped;—but the equivalents! kind eyes watching, and tender hands aiding, and the happy grateful feelings of one who has escaped from death, and who blesses the mercy of Providence which allows her still to look forward with hope. These are things which cheat pain and soften disappointment more effectually than the precious balsam of the Dervise, or even than a relic of the sacred silk which covers the still more sacred Kaaba, though embroidered all over with sentences from the Koran. I see Italy fading before me, and hear of the impending snows that are to make the Alpine passes impassable, with great tranquillity, and forget in pleasanter reflections that I am as immoveable as the young King of the Black Isles, though alas!—for I know it to my cost—not, like him, one half of black marble.

A wet day often annoys even good-tempered people, because, were it not for the rain, they might go out; but when one knows the thing impossible, the mind quickly suits itself to the body's condition, and extracts amusement from objects which before would have been passed over as too insignificant for notice. I look from my couch on a soft

green bank with a single dwelling on its gentle declivity, and a broken line of walnut-trees still rich in leaf, spreading out their sheltering branches and throwing their broad shadows over its roof. My hill stops here to take breath, and then climbs up to the ramparts, part of which, with two old towers, I have full in view. Besides all this, I have a terraced garden hung with vines, and two acacias round as globes and green as the wing of an Indian beetle, and steps winding up and down, and three or four broad-leaved plantains, and as many slender poplars; and above all, a splendid stripe of blue sky, exchanged sometimes for a gentle gray,—as yet I have seen nothing worse.

I cannot describe how all these simple objects please me; I know them in all their lights. There is no movement in my picture, but there is quiet and sweetness, and the kind of variety which sunbeams and shadows give even to the most lifeless and limited aspect of nature. Beneath my window are the *menus plaisirs* of an army of ducks, and a trio of rabbits, one milk white, a beauty on a large scale, the others grave and gray, like two philosophizing water-rats. In one of the towers a warder watches all night, and marks the quarters of the hour by a blast from his horn; when the clock strikes, he blows three blasts, and this clear and

melancholy sound, coming suddenly in the midst of silence and darkness, awakens thought and copes well with night-engendered fancies.

The ladies of Lucerne are never visible by daylight. In this case, as in many others, *never* means *rarely*. It is not the fashion to walk in the streets, and there fashion is right; but neither is it the fashion to walk anywhere else, and there it is wrong,—for to sit in a dull window behind a closed blind, looking into a dark lane, when scenes that might unscrew the joints of gout and rheumatism,—winged scenes, that give chase to the fancy beckon them out of their niches, and that because it is a mode, is bad taste to say no worse for it. The air is soft, the sky pure, there is still melody in the woods, and flowers are yet in the meadows; but a church ceremony neither "magnifique" nor "dévotieuse," or a hot ball at the Casino, is preferred to the splendour of nature, the music of the woods, the breath of heaven.

The society of Lucerne has no doubt its own select amusements, of which passers-by can know nothing; but all its obvious gaiety, all that thrusts itself into the eyes of a stranger is—at least at this season of the year—derived from the church. Half the week is consumed in fête-days, when nobody works, and every body drinks, and the

women move about praying and gazing, and tottering under the uncertain balance of their enormous hats. The pretty summer sulphur one is gradually disappearing with the sun, and is sometimes superseded by a huge black felt, something like a ketchup mushroom gathered at Brobdignag, which sticks upon the head waveringly, as a straw does upon a mountebank's nose. On holidays nothing is to be had here, and every thing or nothing serves for a fête. One day it is the Bishop of Fribourg who comes on a pastoral visit to the Lucerne flock, which has no particular shepherd of its own; all the clergy go out to meet him, and of course the whole population follow to see the show; then the organ peals, and the idlers run to hear it, or to see the bishop, or the vestments, or the mitre,—or something. In the evening a military band (the performers, boy-amateurs) serenades his Eminence; this homage being voluntary, is probably not inscribed on the order of the ceremonial. Another day it is the fête of Saint Léoudard, the patron of Lucerne, and the ladies sing in the cathedral; or a young priest reads his first mass, and the ceremony is followed by a dinner given by him to his friends and relations, each of whom is expected to make a suitable present to the hero of the feast. One of these inau-

guration repasts took place in the saloon under ours this morning. The Archbishop of Seville did not put more cooks in requisition than have been convened for savoury purposes here to-day; the dinner began at noon, and at six the guests were yet at table; indeed it is now seven, and still the sounds of mirth come up from the joyous refectory through an atmosphere of braised meats, fresh flowers, and strong punch, corrected by the aromatic and well-bred effluvia of the long-continued coffee.

There is something figurative about espousing the church designed to be conveyed by these festivities, and a very young lady, or rather child, with white roses in her hair, personates the mystic bride. But whether the allegorical spouse sings to her the Song of Solomon, whether she compares him to a cluster of horses in Pharoah's chariots, or he likens her to spikenard, saffron, or an orchard of pomegranates, I know not.

At all events, it seems quite a heart's content of a dinner;—but it is over now, and the bride declaims from Schiller, so does one of the priests; then the ladies and their cavaliers waltz, so do the priests; and at length, after an interval of music, a kind of concert in which the guitar was gently thrummed by the young renunciant himself, small plays of

rather a rough description are introduced. In these all join, some tied up in table-cloths, others rolled in mattresses, whisking, whirling, jumping on each other's backs, and junketting like school-boys. Shades of Loyala and of the terrible Dominick! how your wrath would have kindled at such profane merriment! how your eyeballs would have glared hot irons and thumb screws! But times are altered, and feelings with them; we lookers-on have probably lost an auto-de-fé, and the grown-up ones who are to-night masters of the harmless revels, have gained a footing (however narrow it may be) on the free ground which nature has given in common partage amongst her children. At this merry priest-making, the curate of Lucerne, a distinguished preacher and most estimable man, looks on indulgently, aware perhaps from experience, that this cheerful farewell to lay pursuits will leave no recollection behind it which may impair the purity, or relax the exertions of a sincerely pious spirit. Yet it must be acknowledged, that to a serious and conscientious mind there is something startling in this jovial preparation for the arduous duties of the priesthood, duties which should never be undertaken but in the sincere intention of performing them worthily.

While on a subject connected with religion, I must add that I do not know of any country in which the beautiful and tolerant spirit of true Christianity is more influential than in Switzerland. Wherever Protestants and Catholics live together, they do so in amity; and though each sect zealously follows and strictly adheres to its own mode of faith, yet the bond of brotherly affection is not loosened.

CHAPTER V.

THE FROZEN LAKE — A ROUGH SKETCH — CHANGE OF ASPECT — HAMLET AT LUCERNE — LUCERNE POLITICS AND OPINIONS — A COUNTRY WEDDING — CLARA WENDAL — CLIMATE OF LUCERNE — WINTER AMUSEMENTS — MARKET-DAY — FAMILY PORTRAITS — THE COUNTRY PEOPLE — INTENDED DEPARTURE — FOR AND AGAINST — CONSOLATIONS — INCREASE OF GAIETY.

Lucerne, if not exactly the Croupignac of La Chapelle, is strong in tooth-achs and rheumatism, which, being vulgar maladies, pull themselves up now and then by the help of an epidemic of a more dignified character. Such a one prevailed here last winter, both in town and neighbourhood, and Doctor —— tells me that the lake being frozen to an unusual depth, and absolutely unnavigable, he used to traverse it from Lucerne to Stantzstad in the darkness of a December night in his sledge. What a dreary image! The vast lake of Lucerne

at midnight, its phantom-mountains faintly visible by the wild glare of their white winding-sheets, a few cold stars gleaming dismally, or black clouds sweeping along and eclipsing even their faint light; then the noise of something rushing onwards over the desolate plain of ice, and the dismal echoes repeating the solitary sound,—the only one! I have heard of uncomfortable journeys, and made some; but the middle of the lake of Lucerne on the unbased ice and with a howling December night about one, makes a revel of the worst of them.

Burgher, or he of the Shadowless Man, might make something of this.—A stranger arrives at night in a lonely house on the borders of a lake, retires weary to his chamber, contrasts the profound silence of nature with the noise of the city from which he has journeyed, listens for a sound until he finds something awful,—almost preternatural in the stillness; becomes thoughtful, recollects the figure of the woman who lighted him to his chamber and the wild restlessness of her eyes; prepares for rest. A light wind rises, the boughs of a tree wave across the window, they knock against it with a low moaning sound; he closes the curtain that the object may not be before his eyes, but the knocking and the low moan is heard behind it. Ashamed of the weakness which steals upon him,

he renews the fire, and sits down beside it; a large mirror hangs before him,—he starts; a cavalier appears in it,—it is himself, but with something fearful and unfamiliar in the aspect; he can neither look at, nor yet escape from it; something seems to stand behind him,—it is his cloak suspended from the wall, but he has not courage to examine it. At this moment a sound is heard,—a sound of something approaching from the distance. He opens the casement; it comes nearer: he knows that the lake spreads out before him far and wide, he knows that the window from which he leans hangs over its surface, and that no wheels can pass along the face of the waters,—and yet it is the sound of a chariot. Whence comes it? where is its track? who guides it? It would not do to answer, "the doctor,"—nor is this at all the way in which Burgher, or the Man of the Shadows would have managed the matter, but something might be made of it in good hands.

To-day, (October 22nd) our signs of habitation were changed to the sunny side of the house. I was quite joyous to feel the warm beams shining in upon me, and to find that in losing my walnut-trees and my old watch-towers, I had got something still better,—the beautiful Gütsch,* swelling

* A hill close to Lucerne.

and sinking like the uplands of Norbury, but wilder, more rapid, and more deeply indented, with a rich crowning of pine forests into which my eye travels and makes paths for itself. I have haunts too in a beech grove, a delicious one, and innumerable sunny seats to which I can transport myself without quitting my sofa. Every day I am tantalized with the description of some silent glen, or happy valley, or chapel in a wood, or solitary cove, — sylvan and lone, and overflowing with romance and mystery. Such a table of contents makes me long to look into the book. I have had but a glimpse of these beautiful things, but they are all at my fingers' ends; by and by I hope to have them in my mind too, which will be better.

November 21st.—The march of reform has arrived here, and halted before the gates of the city. The people of the canton, imperfectly represented in the senate, demand redress. To-morrow the grand council meet to deliberate on their claims, and those who, as actors or spectators, have their own views and wishes, pronounce the word revolution with different inflections. This is the eve of Saint Cecilia's day, and the ladies of Lucerne are chaunting masses in the Jesuit's church in honour of the gentle martyr; and to-night the society of amateur artists gives a supper and a ball. Some-

times, on such occasions, the supper opens the fête, and the ball is only the hem of the garment; but before either commences, the tragedy of Hamlet will be enacted by the dramatic amateurs of the society. The ball is for the members exclusively, but the play for the public. It will be curious enough to see a tragedy of Shakspeare *done into* German, and performed by the gentlemen and ladies of Lucerne; it is not Schlegel's translation which they have adopted, but one presenting fewer difficulties, by a German professor whose name I have forgotten.

22nd.—Hamlet went off like a fire-work;—the best part with prodigious éclat, but here and there a dark interval where the powder had not caught. The Prince himself was excellent, in black velvet, calm, handsome, philosophic, conceiving the character perfectly and acting it (according to the description given to me) more in the way of Kemble than Kean. The translation appeared to be very literal; and probably the German language, being rich and unrestricted, may be more favourable to the expression of the passions as they are developed by the mighty genius of Shakspeare, than one whose harmony was more methodical. It has a harsh and guttural sound which the gentle Swiss voice is eminently calculated to subdue,—it

is so soft, soft even to drawlingness; and I can imagine that "mein lieber Hamlet," may sound as sweetly as "mon cher Hamlet," or "my dear Hamlet," or even "mio caro Amletto." The whole performance was highly creditable to the amateur talent of Lucerne, and more especially so as none of the performers had ever seen this very difficult tragedy acted, and were consequently thrown altogether on the resources of their own judgment.

The "potent, grave, and reverend seniors" are now sitting. The Avoyer has just passed, attended by the *grand sautier* and followed by a slave in office in a party-coloured mantle, the great man himself bowing low as Bolingbroke, and throwing out the tickling-line with the fine-fly courtesy at the end of it. Then pass the Pierres and Jaffiers of the revolution,—the unsound kernels of the council, (as the old ones think them)—in bushy locks, fierce military hats, and strong-minded spectacles. "Patience, good gentlemen, (says one side) and we will give you a charter such as will satisfy all claims, a jewel of a senate, a sugar-plum of a constitution."—"Curs'd be your senate, curs'd your constitution," cries the other; and in the mean time the students, and those who look like them, strut or stand about gesticulating vehe-

mently, and displaying the exact stuff,—even to the very cap and careless neckcloth, of which the friends of the people are every where composed.

How all this is to end seems matter of doubt. Those who are outside wish to eject those who are within; while *they* stand firm, holding their places with both hands. It is the old tune, "ôte-toi que je m'y mette,"—the pith and marrow of revolutionary ardour.

So much is *said* here, that I fear little will be *done*. "We have our arsenal," exclaims a young officer just sent back from Paris, "and our four battalions, and our walls too, and ye know how to defend them."—"We have our gates, it is true," says another, (some ten years older, *et puis littérateur*) "but ten minutes will suffice to bring them down."—"The people are mad," cries a third, "mob, rabble, without ammunition, without order, without resources; what can they effect against armed and disciplined troops?"—one dares not say, "Every thing, provided they be but true." In the meantime we make our bows and curtsies to the goddess Discord, who is holding her apple by the stalk just over our heads, and humbly pray her to close her forefinger and thumb upon it, until we have contrived to make our escape.

All the petitions put up here are not, however, of

the same pacific tendency, and many both of the strutting patriots and obsequious aristocracy are prodigiously afraid lest matters should take an amicable turn,—at least it is so whispered. From what I can learn, these good folks do not so much want a revolution as a scramble; not concessions wisely granted with a view to future and extended good, but a throw-up of coin in the air, a catch-who-catch-can chance of immediate benefit.

A country wedding is usually either a very coarse, or a very Arcadian affair. Yesterday a pretty girl of the richer class of peasants, in her rustic costume, (rustic as to shape, but all silk and embroidery), with two red streamers floating from her long platted tresses down to the ground, and a huge bouquet spreading out from the nape of the neck, exchanged vows with a gentle shepherd arrayed in broad-cloth as fine as her taffeta, and then walked alone from the church, covered perhaps with blushes, perhaps not, to the inn where the wedding festival was to be held. This solitary exhibition, which must be trying to maidenly bashfulness, is imposed by ancient custom. At a distance followed the bridemaids, one by one, each with a nosegay growing, as it were, out of her poll; and after them parents and friends two by two, all honouring the ceremony as much as in their jewels lay.

Meanwhile the bridegroom approached alone, and by another avenue, enveloped in a mantle of unfestal black, his umbrella weighed down by a yard-wide bouquet placed on the top of the crown and spreading over the brim. The adjuncts followed each with his blooming parterre, like the wedding train of Vertumnus. At the entrance of the inn the two parties united, and were hailed by the clamorous music of the town band. The rustic pipe and tabor would have been more in character; but joy here is jollity, and would not believe itself real if it could not sound a testifying trumpet. When fairly housed, the enamoured bumpkin, just converted into a bridegroom, claimed the happy privilege of whirling his fair bumpkinetta through the mazes of the intoxicating waltz; a right which he is permitted to exercise three successive times, to the envy or admiration of the bystanders, who are not allowed to mingle in the nuptial dance, and must wait till the dinner is over to take out their whirling-licence. As I did not see this wedding, I cannot say whether it was an Idyl of Gesner's, or a merry-making of 'Teniers',—perhaps a little of both; but our narrator evidently wished to push it into the precincts of poetry.

Last night we talked of crimes and punishments; of the miserable fanatic, (I think it was at

Zurich) who, as the story goes, had herself crucified in some profane and horrible intention; and of Clara Wendal, the famous woman-robber, whose fine eyes are dimming in the prison here; and heard the mysterious story of the Avoyer,* who returning some fourteen years ago on a wild December night to his country house with his two daughters, disappeared suddenly. The night was dark and stormy, and all other sounds were lost in the uproar of the elements. Arrived at home, the daughters found themselves alone; they believed that their father followed them, but he was gone—and for ever! A day or two afterwards the body was discovered; and a cross — the most touching and impressive of all memorials,—rises from the bed of the river in one of its most beautiful windings, and marks the scene of a misfortune which calumny would have converted into a crime.

Time passed, and no doubt arose of the Avoyer's death having been accidental; the river was swoln and the bank slippery, and nothing seemed more natural than that in the storm and darkness he should have missed his footing and fallen in, when the gang, of which Clara Wendal was chief, was surrounded in the woods and taken. When lodged

M. Zavier Keller.

in the prison at Zurich, Clara suddenly avowed herself deeply concerned in the murder of the Avoyer,—for he had been murdered, she said;—and boldly declared, that taking advantage of the darkness of the night and the tumult of the storm, she, with the help of her brothers, who added their testimony to hers, had pushed him into the river, having been hired to do so by two inhabitants of Lucerne, both gentlemen of unblemished reputation.

At first all was astonishment and disbelief; but the wretches persisted in their story with such perverse consistency, that at length the least credulous were startled. Clara, who was then in full possession of that beauty to which her wild life and lawless profession had probably given more than its due celebrity, went into the most minute details, described the bench under which she had concealed herself while she listened for the expected footsteps, the mode in which her brothers and herself had seized the Avoyer and pushed him off the bank; and more, the room, even to its most inobvious features, in which the salary of murder was paid down to her, and that a room in the house of one of the accused, into which it seemed impossible that she could have introduced herself furtively.

In short, the accusation was so dexterously

dressed and so boldly persisted in, that the axe seemed to tremble over the heads of the arraigned; when the woman-fiend stopped short, and declaring that all to which she had sworn was false, denounced three other inhabitants of Lucerne as having bribed her to the perjury of which she had been guilty, averring most solemnly that she knew nothing whatever of the Avoyer's death, but believed it to have been accidental, and that gold and promises of protection had induced her to accuse the innocent. As it was obvious that the testimony of such a wretch could not be admitted, the proceedings were immediately quashed, and Clara with her atrocious family (a mother included) were consigned to perpetual imprisonment in the Maison de Force. They say she has lost her demoniacal beauty; but as she is rigorously confined it is next to impossible to see her. When she was in the river tower at Zurich, it was said that strangers offered ten, and even twenty guineas for a peep. I will not vouch for the truth of this story, though the addition of the bidders being English gives it a colouring. Other people commit follies, but none pay for them so dearly as we do.

The band, of which Clara Wendal was the chief, belonged to those wandering tribes who exist in

the wilds of Switzerland pretty much in the same way as our gypsies do in England, having no home but the woods, living or starving in idleness and guilt, and frequently adding to their habitual trade of pillage some daring violation of the law, which arms the hand of justice against them. The Wendals were accused of complicity in many murders: one of the sons, having probably some touch of humanity about him, hired himself to work with a farmer in the neighbourhood, but the old she-wolf, his mother, went herself and forced him back to her den.

Who was it that called the climate bad at Lucerne, and said that it always rained? &c. &c.—it could not have been me; and yet I have a sort of conscious feeling, a vague recollection of something immaturely said, and requiring an apology. Certainly, if all winters are like this, I am a base vilifier; it is delightful, and if it does not put on an absolutely Italian countenance, assumes at least the very best looks of a French one. We have a southern October, and a November as mild and cheerful as a modern May,—which, by the by, is no longer what it was when poets called it the rosy month, and waited for its approach to open their accounts with Cupid. Even December comes sweeping mildly by, her head a little muffled, but

in a gentle and undressed mood; no triumph of wind instruments, no powdered periwig or icicle ornaments; all soft; and still, and poetical, as if she never had been called "hoar winter," or "rough winter," or any such ungentle name.

The depth of winter is here the season of gaiety, and the traineau party is the crown imperial. When the lake is frozen, (which we are promised will soon be the case) we shall have the belles of Lucerne flying along on the ice and the beaus gliding after them, like the shades of those Greenland lovers whose souls still pursue in the land of spirits the hopes and pastimes of a less ethereal world. Balls too are given, to which ladies are not afraid to walk through frost and snow; and masquerades and many other carnival gaieties cheer the dark season, which at a distance seems to throw a pall over Switzerland. The best balls are got up by subscription; a *bal d'entrée* * admits every one, workmen, peasants, servant girls, all ranks, all dresses, and of course excludes by its facility the queen bees, who keep apart from the greasy atmosphere. All one whether they do or not, to the good folks who pay thirty sous entrance, waltz till they are breathless in a fine room hand-

* Where tickets are paid for at the door.

somely lighted up, and to excellent music; and if they choose to pay for a supper, sit down to an abundant and well-arranged table, and eat, drink, and enjoy themselves ad libitum, but with decency, till Aurora holds up her red—at present, gray finger, and beckons them back to their usual course of servitude or labour.

At these balls play does not, I believe, make part of the entertainment, though the love of play seems the capital sin here. National games are those most in vogue, and amongst them one called —I think—Kaiserspiel, (a great favourite with the market folks) contrives to outdo Mora in clamour. Every Tuesday Lucerne dresses out, and gives way to gaiety; it is the market-day. Boats arrive from all parts of the lake, rowed sometimes by men, sometimes by women, with a cargo of grain, or wooden ware, or other merchandise, and a supercargo of live stock on the top of it in caps of all hues, and knots of cherry-coloured ribbon, and legs dangling in every possibility of stocking over bale and pannier. The last day when I crossed the lake—I have reason to remember it—was a market-day, and though with small heart for festivity, I could not but feel pleasure in the sweetness of the scene.—Boats gliding down with the current, rowers tugging lustily against it, music in one,

mirth in another, and in a third meditative figures, less reflective perhaps than fatigued, but with a good outstretched air of repose about them: the lake in its purity, the sky in its splendour, and the mountains standing round, silent yet full of speech, like a gallery of fine portraits.

This last word puts me in mind of my immovability. While I sit here tête-à-tête with my little bird, who after having just now croaked like an angry bull-frog has suddenly burst out into his hand-organ air (his accomplishment) in the drollest way possible, all my tribe are gone off to see some family portraits—said to be interesting—in the possession of a gentleman of the neighbourhood. I should have liked to have gone too, and seen those quaint dames and rigid gentlemen, who, though usually considered as lumber, I always find amusing, if their dress or accessories be curious, or characteristic of a particular age or country.

Which is best,—seeing an undoubted portrait of a remarkable original, or listening to the description by one who has known the original itself? a portrait of Bianca Capello (for instance) by Titian, or Montaigne's notice of her voluminous charms, when he looked on and she sat at dinner with the Grand Duke and the Cardinal, given in the familiar every-day phrase which bestows so

much freshness and identity on its subject, making things immediate which have long ago become historical? I am at a loss to answer my own question, but feel something like the bishop who, when offered the choice of two dioceses, said (as if by mistake) that both were best; and am for the description and the portrait too, just as he was for the double preferment.

All these old things, that help thought and make it memory, delight me. They do not always give to things so becoming an aspect as our fancy might help them to, but they give a truer one, something to hold by and reason on; sometimes they better our previous idea of an object, and then their effect is very agreeable, sometimes they disenchant us. But there is always good picking for the physiognomist, and curious study for the reflecting mind.

The country people here are downright country people; the women round as Dutch firkins, and Dutch as Teniers' foreground dancers, with one arm a-kimbo and one foot off the ground, though not quite in the air. I speak of them in their winter garb, for they are shepherdesses in their summer sleeves and summer hats, and belong to daisies and green fields; but in the winter spencer and embroidered cap of snug velvet, from which

the wide face blows out nakedly, they may vie with any herring-pickler from the coast of Holland. At Berne the female form is pinioned back like a trussed fowl, and one looks for the liver and gizzard, or thinks of them. But here, the shapes swell out of every thing that approaches proportion. I cannot make out how the enormous waist unites itself with the petticoat, for there is no visible line of union,—or rather of division; and the zone would find as little room for application here, as the word charm which belongs to its pagan recollections.

The young men have no pretensions to originality. They wear casquettes, and look like town artisans; but the old ones stick to the primitive beaver and square coat, with a long scarlet waistcoat and Plantagenet garter. Town-fashions carried into cottages, immediately communicate an air of degradation to the wearer; but the flowing skirts speak acres, and the flapped waistcoat, with a careless flower stuck in the button-hole, all the abundance of fat kine and overflowing granaries. I like the air of grave importance with which these ancients swing about from stall to stall on a market-day, with a broad-built female hanging on the paternal arm, sporting—I am afraid to say how much of—limbs infinitely better shaped than might

have been presumed from the rest of her bolster proportions, and discussing an umbrella or a frieze petticoat in mysterious whispers; passing friends giving an apart opinion, and then walking off arm in arm, little knowing, good souls! in what bad odour this cordial fashion is held in finer places. The country women here are very homely, but amongst a crowd of coarse plain faces should a pretty one peep out, it is usually of a softer character than that which distinguishes the market beauties of Berne, whose charms slap you in the face, and have, at best, a kind of masculine regularity about them more genteel perhaps, but less pleasing than the rosy softness of the few who start out here and there from the aforesaid crowd of bronze visors. As Switzerland is my *pays d'amour*, I would fain people it with such pretty things as poets dream of; but neither the fair country maiden, nor the nut-brown beauty in whom our old bards delighted, are the common coinage of this country.

December 20th.—Just as we had arranged every thing for our departure, comes the snow,—six weeks later this year than usual. What a bright look forward! If we stay, a Siberian winter (probably) with the chance, some say certainty, of an insurrection, and perhaps an inundation of foreign

troops, without the possibility of running away from them; shut up at one side by the lake which leads only to ways at this season inaccessible, and belted round by a country in a high state of revolutionary excitement; dark days, a white world, long dreary nights, and constant alarm. If we go, a kind of Russian retreat,—intense cold, dismal bivouacking in damp inns, the danger of being snow-bound in some desperate spot—a besieged town perhaps,—and of passing through a country on the eve of explosion. Our friend —— thinks that we may stay a week longer in safety. By that time, it is presumed, the new Constitution will be rendered presentable; should it please, all will be milk and honey, but the danger is that the people of the country may disapprove of it, and then there may be "quelques petits excès;"—what a look forward after Brussels!

Every day some new report reaches us, which the next day's rumour contradicts. At one moment Louis Philippe has abdicated; a Neapolitan officer who has private sources of information vouches for it: then Turin is surrounded by troops. The next moment it is not Turin, but Rome; they fight in the streets, the cannons of St. Angelo roll; no more Austrians,—no more Pope,—every where liberty!—a glorious word,

and sounds magnificently in the mountains; but to avoid the first run of the gamut, which is not always in tune, we must be off. "O what a night for Cæsar and his fortunes!"—perhaps to-morrow may be better.

No, it is worse; snow up to the eyes, and the market like a scene at Petersburg; nothing wanting but the frozen pigs. Many consolations are offered to us, such as the possibility of a retreat by the lake to one of its lone villages, where we may lie hid in the snow while the town is undergoing the horrors of pillage,—that is, provided no stray scouring party stumbles on our retreat and makes mince-meat of us by way of pastime. The suave Guiseppe, too, offers in case of danger to conduct us to the frontiers with a *thousand* men, and to suffer himself to be cut to pieces for us if necessary. If we are not of good heart, it is certainly not the fault of those about us, at least of their intentions, for the proposed means of safety are scarcely less alarming than the threatened danger; indeed—when I add to them the extreme personal difficulty I should have in moving—to me almost more so.

At length we are completely blocked up; no possibility of stirring; saved by providential colds from the first burst at Lausanne, and now pad-

locked by the elements, the dangerous state of the neighbouring cantons, and other imperatives. In the mean time we grow gay; deputies arrive every day, and the rolling of wheels is heard in the city, —a sound as strange here, as that of joy would have been in Ramah. Some trundle along in a coach in which the whole family of Noah might be conveniently stowed,—quite a deluge contrivance, —others rattle by stuffed within the narrower limits of modern luxury. On every coach-box sits a *huissier*, looking like a court-card, with the colours of his canton folded round him in the shape of a cloak, one half white, the other scarlet, or blue, or black, or whatever happens to be the shade of his official patriotism, surmounted by a three-cornered hat with the side before, exceeding fierce. A carriage at Lucerne is (at least at this quiet season) as attractive as a pageant at Paris; as each arrives a crowd gathers round it, and every deputy enjoys his own particular ovation.

CHAPTER VI.

NEW-YEAR'S DAY — SCRIPTURAL BEAUTY AND SIMPLICITY — CHRISTMAS CAROLS — AULD LANG SYNE — THE TODENHAUS — THE EARLY GRAVE — MY FIRST DAY OF FREEDOM — THE PILATE — THE BAY OF WINKEL — SLEDGES — NEWS FROM BASLE — BALLS — VIEWS — TRAINEAUS — CORDELIERS — INDULGENCE — THE SOLITARY TREE — HOLIDAYS — MOTHERS — SNOW — AGREMENS OF LUCERNE — QUARTERLY FAIR — CRIME AND PUNISHMENT — THE EXECUTIONER'S GARDEN.

JANUARY 1st, 1831.—I cannot recollect that this is new-year's day, without the strongest emotions of gratitude to Providence. When I think of what I might have been but for its infinite mercy, my heart swells, and thoughts stir within it which find no speech in words. In England we sometimes dance or eat in the new year, caressing it as a presage of future enjoyment; but here, as in

Paris, the visiting-book is spread open, and the whole alphabet of friendship, or rather acquaintanceship, run through. Cards must be left every where, or calls made; omission would be offence. I do not know whether the kindly fashion of gift-giving prevails here. In Paris the selection of new-year's gifts fills up half the month of December, and every shop is a museum of art, or a bazaar in which Bagdad itself might glorify; high people drive about with their pretty pampered children, loading their carriages with splendid inutilities; humbler ones trot along,—one with a tin coach and six, another with a drum, and a third with a snow-white poodle with a bellows in its stomach; while dolls, bon-bons, and artificial rose-trees with glasses over them, fill the hands of the hurried pedestrians who have snatched a few minutes from their habitual occupations to run out and purchase the inevitable present. As for us whose hearth is cold and far distant, we try to make our new-year's day look as like a home one as we can, salute each other with the compliments of the season, and have our Christmas fare re-edited; again plum-pudding and roast beef, and muscat, doubling—to the best of its powers—the baronial malmsey.

Last night some tuneless minstrels hailed the new year, just as the great clock tolled out the last

hour of the old one. A fine moment for a burst of high celestial harmony, but their weak fluting was not even hundredth-cousin to the immortal music of the spheres. The sound of the clock was solemn and suitable, but the carol was all beer and tobacco. The midnight mass (on Christmas-eve) is not in good odour here; it is left, as at Paris, to the rabble, the curious, and the light-fingered.

"There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night;"—what a beautiful opening to the holy narrative which follows! The simple and devout earnestness of the Evangelists, the entire belief and perfect sincerity of heart with which they testify to the eye-witnessed history of their Divine Master, contain more of the natural soul of poetry new-born and unschooled, than reams of rhyme polished to the last hair-stroke of refinement. In the sacred writings the simplest images,—such as spring up in common minds or are produced by common combinations,—come out like holy things, which the imagination had not before conceived in their full loveliness. The fair young mother, holding her infant in her arms, and seated on the patient beast whose race remains to this day an emblem of humility, going slowly upwards to the "hill-countries;" her husband walking by her side, and

watching her with tender carefulness; or the same group reposing by the brink of a solitary spring, or under the shade of a wide tree, is a picture that often meets the eye and is passed over by it. But in the writings of the Evangelists its simplicity becomes sublime, and great painters, feeling their highest powers awakened by its contemplation, have surpassed themselves in embodying its loveliness.

These thoughts have been put into my head by our midnight music, and the surprise which I felt at hearing such beggarly piping in a musical country and on such a poetical occasion; for, setting aside the religious feeling which might in itself be inspiration, there is something of ancient association in the mere sound of Christmas-eve; something too of thought and poetry in the voice of that midnight clock that tolls out the old year and announces the coming of the new, which might well awaken the fancy and touch the heart; and yet nothing can be so denuded of feeling and imagination as the ordinary Christmas carol, or new-year's hymn. The pious feeling, the fast belief, which brings the poor Calabrian piper down from his mountains to the holy city to play before the image of the Virgin, has a beautiful colouring of devout simplicity about it which atones for the

rudeness of his music; but the marrowbone-and-cleaver homage, the hoarse broken-winded welcome, removes the mind at once from the city of Bethlehem in Judea, and burlesques by its vulgar dissonance the sanctity of the past, and the silent engagement which the heart makes with the future.

I think I have seen the Christmas holly glistening through some of the windows here. "And what of that?" says a voice in my ear; "nothing more common in England than holly, and ivy too, at Christmas." Granted, and it is precisely for that very reason that the sight of it *here* stirs up my heart. When I see the familiar mistletoe hanging about on the rough apple-trees, mocking winter with its bright green leaf and pure unshrivelled berry, my fancy runs back to the Manor-house and its hearty old-fashioned festivities, and I feel as if I were lineally descended from the worthy baronet of Coverly Hall. Indeed so much do I love old usages, that last night when I heard that Gaspar, Balthazar, and Melchior had come (it being the Epiphany) visiting here in crown of precious metal and eastern tunics, stretched over their ordinary garments, I rejoiced. These happened to be women, which did not prevent them from being crowned kings also, and maintaining their dignity as such as they stood looking on in

solemn silence, while some varlets in the common hall danced to the music of their majesties' private band.

Within the cemetery of the cathedral is a chapel called the Todenhaus, or dead-house. When any one dies, the body is removed (if it be the wish of the friends) to this consecrated receptacle, where it remains until the appointed time of interment. The coffin is placed on a bier in the centre of the chapel, with the face of the corpse uncovered; if it be that of a woman, it is watched night and day by women; if that of a man, by men. A lamp burns always beside it, and the friends of the deceased may enter when they please, and offer up in the solemn presence of the dead, such prayers as their earthly grief or better hopes may dictate. Every thing is conducted in silence and with decency, and those who have never before looked upon death, see nothing repulsive in its aspect thus watched and mourned; while the solemn reflections that may be awakened by its presence, are not unlikely to be productive of those fruits which ripen beyond the grave.

Besides the usually alleged reasons for exposing the body of the dead,—such as its allowing the means of ascertaining that death had been produced by natural causes, and also that dissolution

had actually taken place, a certainty which the custom of hasty interment forced by necessity upon the poor may not always allow time to ascertain,—there are yet others which may be brought forward in favour of this usage as it is practised here. Suppose it to be chiefly taken advantage of by persons whose means are limited, and who are obliged to crowd together into one or two small chambers, sometimes perhaps with no other bed than that on which the body of the dead is laid; and the comfort of such a resource, even as it regards the remains of one whom they have loved, and whom they would—but could not without this aid—surround with the last decencies, must be obvious. In cases too of infection, or in crowded lodging-houses, where many families may be said to live almost together, much evil may be prevented by a custom which repugns the heart at first, but which appears when considered calmly, both reasonable and humane.*

This morning L— strolled into the Cathedral; the door of the dead-house was open; he looked in, the corpse of a young girl lay there in a coffin,

* I cannot exactly say whether or not the upper classes, who have not the same plea of necessity, conform to this usage; I have asked the question two or three times, and have been answered variously.

with the face as usual uncovered; a garland of flowers concealed the hair, and contrasted its new-born life with the pale and altered features from which death was gradually effacing the mortal lineaments. This cold clay was but a little while ago the pretty girl of the Balance,* whom many English travellers may probably recollect to have admired for her modesty and beauty. She was the fairest of a family remarkable for comeliness and discretion, and from whose attractions and good conduct the house has derived a highly respectable celebrity. Nothing is more melancholy than an early grave; the old have hung their time, and drop off gently like fruit in its ripeness, but the young—the young who were so full of hope—the young in whom the germ of life seemed so fresh and vigorous, the innocent who had but just stepped on the threshold of existence! We have need to hold fast by the hope that they are happier than when here with us, to reconcile our minds to the breaking down of that guarantee which the promise of unbroken youth offers to the heart.

January 7th.—To-day I have felt the open air blow upon me freely,—not through a window—and for the first time for almost four months. I

* An inn at Lucerne.

have seen the rushing river, the mountains, all that I have longed to see; I have been through a forest, and respired the odour of the fallen leaves, a fragrant odour with a fine melancholy moral in it. Every thing seems a benediction, and I feel myself wondering, as I drive along, how people can think of ball rooms when the wonders of the earth and sky are open to them. As I went out, our good hostess came to meet me, with a sweet natural air of joy that made her look quite handsome. I think I shall never forget the kind heartfelt way in which she seized my hand and kissed it, saying in her gentle Swiss voice, "Gott ist gut! Gott ist gut."*

The snow was magnificent; I saluted it as if it had been the enamelled carpet of the sweet south, and doubted whether it was not more beautiful than verdure; particular circumstances and individual feeling may have somewhat quickened my enthusiasm, but the effect was glorious. Our friends in Paris pity us, and imagine a winter in Switzerland to be the same thing as a winter at St. Peter and Paul's; but the sky was fit for May-day, (when May-days were some suns warmer than they are now,) and the air a perfume.

The great Pilate is oftener severe than beautiful,

* God is good.

but this afternoon it was marvellously so, seeming to belong entirely to heaven. A thin warm vapour hung over it from the awful head down to the wide base, through which its majestic form appeared as the future may be supposed to do in the mirror of the magician. I scarcely know of any mountain so finely isolated as the Pilate; many are of greater height, without being of equal importance; it does not reach that region of the air where the clothing of snow becomes eternal, but it yields to none, however white, in regal dignity. Its deeply indented outline and fine stern colouring are perfect, and I have seen it touched by such lights and darkened by such shadows, as made bright work in the imagination. It has a way, too, of putting its great eye through a hole in a cloud, with an air of inquiry that alarms like an angry conscience.

"Who is it that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?"—More deputies, more party-coloured cloaks; and presently we shall have a general, and a staff, and balls, and masques—no, not masques, they are forbidden; but instead, there will be the new sugar-plum, *the Constitution*; very delicate confectionary, piping hot from the land of promise; all caramel and sweet almonds, some say; while others cry it down as common lollypop, only fit for country folks. Time will tell,

but not speedily ; for the confectioners here are clumsy hands, and sometimes let their syrups boil over, or burn, or stick to the bottom of the pan, and then they have all their work to begin over again.

January 14th.—Drove in a sledge to the sweet melancholy bay of Winkel, through a valley beautiful even in its winding-sheet ; perhaps more so in some respects than in its summer livery, for I suspect swamps and a ragged knotty foreground, which the white down equalizes. Two women were rowing a solitary traveller across the bay, and a boat laden with wood was stealing off from the shore at Stantzstad ; but there was no sound either of wind or wave, no voice of children, or cry of bird, or low of cattle, not even a dog barked. The water was deep, and clear, and still ; the rills stiffened in their gush and soundless ; the clouds dark and stationary. Three women stood looking at us in profound silence, motionless as statues. It was beautiful, but lonely,—lonely beyond any thing that I had seen for many a day : the still water, and the white mountains, and the dark pine trees, their branches weighed down with snow, and laying heavily on the ground, added to the effect. In the summer gay birds, and fresh grass, and bursting flowers, may give a colouring of cheerfulness to

this scene, but in its present garb it would suit the melancholy mythology of the north. There are hills here, in whose hollow womb Hilda and Sangrida with their fierce troop of sable cavalry, might find depth and darkness enough for the full exercise of their terrific industry.

I was in hopes of seeing one of the mountain traineaus (sledges) steered through the woods, but was disappointed; we heard the distant shouts of the hardy driver, but could see nothing. The peasant climbs to the summit of a mountain with his sledge on his back, loads it with wood, or whatever else he wishes to transport, places himself in front of his freight, and directs it down the most fearfully steep paths by the movement of his heels; it descends with the velocity of a cataract, while the driver shouts, and the woods ring to his wild cry. Should the motion become alarmingly rapid, he drops a chain attached to the side of the sledge which retards it a little; but accidents frequently occur, limbs are fractured, and sometimes from the suddenness of the descent, the sledge is precipitated so violently, that the load overwhelms the driver who is crushed under its weight. Yet even peasant girls (as we are told) descend fearlessly; yesterday one of these mountain nymphs offered to steer down from her father's nest in the land of

eagles to the foot of the mountain, but he preferred his staff and *crampons* though she pledged herself gaily for his safety. It was but the day before (she said), that she had managed a traineau with all her family—eight in number—stuck in and about it, through the roughest and steepest path of the mountain, and landed them all safely at the chapel down below.

Horrible news from Basle! Cannon planted, streets unpaved, gates closed, and thirty thousand armed peasants surrounding the city!—such is the report. A battle has been fought, all the issues are closing up round us, and if this state of things continues, we shall soon have no means of escape left. We reflect, but cannot decide, whether it is best to remain and take our chance of continued tranquillity, or risk forced marches through a country up in arms. We ask advice; "fly," says one, "stay," says another; and while we deliberate, the ladies of Lucerne walk by through the snow to a ball, with their maids leading the van, each with a lantern carefully lowered to the point of utility. When double cloaks and double shoes have done their office, very smart toilettes, and sometimes very fair ladies, step out of them, as the little dog in the fairy tale did from the heart of the kernel, when the impatient prince (I think he was a prince) cracked the nutshell.

No quadrilles are danced; nothing, from eight in the evening till five in the morning, but waltzes. We talk of Sir Isaac Newton's head, and of the "starry Galileo's;" poor men! they could look up, it is true, at the stars without growing giddy; but what are such heads compared with the heads of Lucerne, which after having turned round and round, like a geometrical staircase set in motion, for nine or ten successive hours, take to the pillow with brains, &c. underanged,—every thing tight and compact in its separate cell, like honey in the comb, or French plums packed in a box for a Marseilles export.

What a winter! Mounted up (always *en traineau*) to Uttiberg, to the great tree, to the immortal view! and then on to Dietschenberg. Snow below, summer above, and the sound of bells in the high solitude. I prefer this view to that from the Gütsch, which is more celebrated; it has the Pilate, for whose loss nothing can make up to me. The Gütsch hill is however very beautiful, and behind the house which stands alone on its brink and will, probably, be blown over it some stormy night, is a green platform with some linden trees upon it worth every thing in the shape of a country place that I have seen at Lucerne, where raw, mean, neglected-looking houses, without a tree or a flower, scarcely a blade of grass, are called *cam-*

pagnes. Traineaus are not so generally used as I had expected; we meet with few, and these few usually filled with peasants; but to-day there is a great turn out,—young gentlemen driving young ladies, (all in honour) and sledge flying after sledge to the general rendezvous, probably some village inn in the neighbourhood. At every mile or two, one of these pretty inns presents itself, and when the weather permits they are much frequented; ladies go there to take coffee or tea, gentlemen to take wine, &c.,—and all to amuse themselves. These inns, like all the farm houses and cottages in the country, are built of wood, and have all a large room (but low) for festive purposes.

I feel that if I were to remain long amidst the snows of Switzerland, I should contract a passion for—I was going to say—traineaus; but I mean their movement, their rapid, smooth, lazy yet enlivening movement, which I find delightful. The feeling of safety (except when a huge dog threatens to jump in upon you, or a passing bull flouts his horns in your face) is also very agreeable. Just overtaken by a sledge-load of jolly Cordeliers, "round, fat, oily men of God," with cheeks like the sunny side of a ripe peach; who, if they were to set out on a pilgrimage with peas in their shoes,

would certainly take the liberty to boil them before they had travelled many furlongs.

Of these Cordeliers fame speaks somewhat irreverently, at least of the young ones, who are sad libertines or have the name of being so,—cowled Don Juans, fitter for bucaniers than for their dim church and Italian cloisters. But the Capuchins are reputed pious and charitable, profuse of soup and prayer, and of inoffensive manners. They have an odd unmonastic custom of occasionally giving a sort of public dinner, which is numerously attended by the gentlemen of the town; they do not (I believe) sit at table with the guests, but they provide the feast, and are handsomely remunerated for their trouble and expense. After this convent-tavern dinner, play—strange to say—is allowed; the friars, it is true, take no part in it, but neither do they oppose it. This seemed to me such an excess of indulgence, that I made my informer (a very veracious person) repeat it twice over. Others—unquestionable people too—assure me that the rich and benevolent Bernardines of St. Urbain, who are remarkable for their hospitality to strangers of both sexes, act plays in the carnival time, and waltz, and mask, (but only amongst themselves), running wild like children who are still at kites and leapfrog.

Looking to the right as you go along from Lucerne by the Kussnacht road, there is a solitary tree that grows on the edge of the lake with a rude shed beside it. I never go that way without paying it a passing homage, it is so beautiful in its loneliness. To-day the woods are covered with snow, but this tree has not a flake upon it; it is alone in the landscape, like the last hope in the heart, all the more precious for its singleness.

THE SOLITARY TREE.

There is a tree, a single tree,
  It is alone upon the shore;
It looks upon the inland sea,
  'Tis leafless,—so are many more.

But some are gemmed with sparkling snow,
  And some are plum'd like lady bright;
And others that more wildly grow,
  Seem canopied with silver light.

But this lone tree has neither gem
  Nor plume upon its lofty brow;
No jewels in its diadem,
  But those which high above it glow.

It has the stars that shine in heav'n,
  It has the blue and beamy sky;
And there it stands at close of ev'n,
  Alone in their bright company.

And when the morning sun awakes,
It looks upon the lonely tree,
That all day long with low moan makes
Wild music o'er the inland sea.

Its boughs are traced on the blue sky,
The sky looks through its branches rude;
I would not have another nigh,
To break its holy solitude.

The woods are like a glitt'ring zone,
Where tree is fondly link'd with tree;
But I best love the lonely one,
That looks upon the inland sea.

Half the year is here consumed in fêtes, which begin in the church, and end in the public-house; this order of things generally leads to a state of poverty, manifested by the usual outward and visible signs, but the evidences of poverty here are neither numerous nor striking. The peasants, who form the principal figures in the festivals both sacred and profane, crowd in from the surrounding districts at the first toll of the bell, all well dressed, and the women sometimes richly, all sleek and stall fed, and all disposed for a day of idle enjoyment. The next day is perhaps again fête, and the same plodding visages reproduce themselves, leaving the household gods to take care of the domestic affairs as it may please their

divinities. If one has occasion to make any trifling purchase in the morning, ten to one but the shops are shut, perhaps for the day, at all events until eleven or twelve o'clock. It is the fête of St. Leger, or St. Maurice, or St. Nicholas; it is All-souls, or All-saints, no matter what, in short, the pretext is always ready for a day of diversion. The festivals and ceremonies of the church seem to be food and raiment to the people, and in a more than figurative sense; for when one sees such an appearance of comfort, united with habits so destructive of industry, one is tempted to believe in the old legends which tell us, that while the pious tarried in far-off places to pray, good spirits came and did the work of their fields and vineyards. If you try to find a more obvious solution of the problem, the answer is "mais nos paysans sont très riches;" and if you express surprise at the uninterrupted continuance of such prosperity, you are again told, "mais ils sont très riches, nos paysans," and this is all the information to be obtained on the subject.

With all this love of holiday-enjoyment, still the people here do not appear gay; they laugh loudly sometimes and are noisy, but the every day countenance is grave and unjoyous. There is a remarkable air of silence about their cottages, nor

are their children, I think, (but this may be fancy) so merry or turbulent as ours. I am sure the women must be kind mothers and gentle ones; I do not recollect to have ever seen a woman chastise a child, or heard from within their dwellings the sharp shriek or grant of deep distress, which often issues from our humble habitations. No more tender, devoted, or judicious mothers exist than our English ones, but the poor (it must be owned) have a very summary way of calming their turbulent cherubims. I am always seized with terror, when I see an angry woman rush out of her door and seize on the bawling urchin that kicks and sprawls before it. But, poor souls! they are a harassed race, and great allowance should be made for their galled tempers. If our poor married drudges are not downright Grizzles naturally, they must soon become stormy. The labour of their washing, ironing, scrubbing, sewing, fretting, overworked and under-fed lives, with the wants of the day always uppermost, and the means of providing for them too often consumed by their heartless partners at the public-house, leaves but little time for working with the slow instrument of reason. But the tongue and hands are always ready; and perhaps their free exercise becomes a luxury where other luxuries are so rare.

Snow scenes on a grand scale are magnificent; but little bits have always the air (to me at least) of the transparencies which Giroux or Ackermann stick into the middle of their hand-screens for Christmas consumption. Here every aspect of beauty or grandeur which snow can assume arrests and amuses the eye. From the Pilate to the Righi all are *now* snow-mountains, mute, severe, monotonous, but infinitely grand; while the nearer details exhibit all the minute delicacy of fairy workmanship. An ivory toy, carved by Chinese fingers, would appear clumsy near to the weeds that hang from the old walls like strings of seed-pearl, or the fine net-work that covers the fibrous leaves. Every tree bends under its dazzling load, every briar emulates the fine alums of a chymist's cabinet, every willow-twig glitters as if the dew upon it were crystallized, and the snow has so worked into the branches of the pines that they assume the air of white corals, or of the natural rock-work which adheres to sea-shells. At this moment a breeze rises; the loaded boughs bend down as it passes over them, and then rise up again with a soft undulating movement, while the heavy snow sits on them like a seagull on a billow, swelling and sinking, but still immovable.

Every where this beautiful snow is marked by

the traces of the fox, the hare, or of the poor bird that seeks at a distance its difficult food. The sun is in the heavens, it has even warmth in it, and we glide along by the pure Reuss,—clear and green as our country brooks that run all day long over sedges, and looking as if nothing but gold and silver fish were fit to live in it. Admired all these charming things until the sun ran away from us; and when we returned the town looked cold and black, as if its name should be Petropawloski, or something in that way; all which does not prevent that part of it which edges the river between the Kappelbrücke and the Reussbrücke from having an air of Venice. The church of the Jesuits helps out the resemblance; it has a Venetian look, and I have sufficiently forgotten the Redentore not to be offended by its humbler pretensions.

There are some beautiful iron balconies here, which knights and ladies might look up to or bend down from without derogating from the high dignity of romance, and two or three dusky fountains that look like old bronzes, and some carved doors, and odd windows; and there are the bridges, too, worth all the rest put together. Besides these stationary features, *we* pique ourselves on others of a more brilliant, though less permanent character; we have the diet, the commander-in-chief,

the état-major, the French minister, the quarterly fair, the troops of the canton pouring in to be inspected previous to the expected order of march to the frontiers, and the last week of the carnival, the only one in which (for political reasons) any kind of gaiety has been permitted.

From such a bill of fare, one should suppose that the ancient revelries of Venice were revived at Lucerne; but except the bustle of the soldiers who march into town, in order and out of order, the first batch of each battalion keeping the regular lock-step, and the awkward squad behind running in any way, —except (I say) their bustle, and drumming, and whooping out their mountain melodies,—which, not being the usual music of the streets, have a strange effect in them,—nothing is added by this influx to the general movement. The reigning Doge (i. e. Avoyer) is adverse to the midnight masque and plotting domino,—for reasons of state. The senators convene together in silence; nothing comes out of the lion's mouth; they are like the good man who built his bower by the road side, "and there (said he) I reads, and reads, and nobody's never the wiser." The French minister makes no sign, nor the commandant either,—only a bow from his saddle, like Don Juan's uncle. As for the fair,—a fair on the borders of Germany comes to

the imagination with something of Frankfort or Leipsig in it, but this consists of a few mean booths, occupied by three or four Italian pedlars, as many hawkers from Basle and Zurich, a glover from the Tyrol, and perhaps a dozen retailers of small wares belonging to the town: no one comes from Mecca with precious balms, nor yet with picked pearls from Bussora; no merchant brings furs from Astracan, nor journeys across the Alps with the rich velvets of Genoa; all are mere tape and stay-lace Autolycuses, without the relief of the Zingara, or juggler, or even of any ingenious professor adroit enough to swallow a sword, or cure the tape-worm. Perhaps the venders of such precious articles do not go to Frankfort, or Leipsig either; no matter, one fancies it.

Last night a man murdered his wife's mother; and having done so, walked quietly down stairs, and said to the first person he met with, "I have killed the woman." This declaration, he now says, was made in a moment of insanity, and persists in denying the crime. The evidence against him is too decisive to admit of doubt, and is strengthened by the known atrociousness of his character; but as the avowal of the accused himself is necessary to his condemnation, (a law pregnant with evil, and which makes the fate of a man depend not so much

on his guilt or innocence, as on his physical force,) he is consigned to a dungeon until confinement, solitude, and prison fare shall have lowered his tone. There is in the same prison a young man not more than twenty, who has been in durance for twelve months on the charge of parricide; there exists no doubt of his having murdered both his parents. He chose slow poison as his instrument, augmenting the dose by slight degrees, and feasting on their gradual agonies!

To hear of such things congeals the blood as if one saw a spectre, or heard that something deadly had risen up from out of the earth, and was walking abroad in the world; yet this wretch's impenitent hardiness still holds out; all means have hitherto failed in extorting a confession. I asked what was likely to become of him; "he may probably be forgotten at last," was the answer,—thoughtlessly given, perhaps, for it is impossible to imagine justice so carelessly administered under any form of government whatever.

And yet, notwithstanding the chances held out to the guilty, executions are frequent and terrible. Crime calls for punishment, nor should the honest and peaceable be rendered liable to the danger of having the desperate criminal thrown out upon them; but a forced death in the midst of life, a

death that cuts off the possibility of amendment, a death without repentance, (for what is the repentance of terror?) has something unnatural and appalling in it; and then the great question,—amply resolved in our own, and other countries, where the example of capital punishment has been proved beyond all dispute to be ineffectual as a warning,—ought it not to be laid at rest? Great and humane minds have investigated this question deeply and closely, and in all its bearings; it is tried and condemned, yet its condemnation, like the death of the malefactor, has failed to produce any ultimate benefit.

In the corner of a shunned and neglected-looking field on the banks of the Emman, is the pastoral dwelling of the executioner, a lone wicked-looking hut, with a gibbet standing gloomily beside it. Again, near to the Porte de Basle, and to the most public and frequented of the roads that lead out from the town, is the platform on which criminals are decapitated. The executioner's house is close by, his garden touches the platform, and before the frost had killed every thing, the soft fragrance of the mignionette with which it was profusely sown, often attracted some of the members of my family towards its vicinity, little thinking who it was that loved flowers so much, and cultivated them so

sedulously. Flowers are not much cultivated here, and the little garden near the river had become a favourite with them. What a singular contrast! flowers, the delight of innocent and gentle minds, and the fearful instrument of condign punishment! flowers sown and cherished by the wife or daughter of the executioner,—perhaps by his own hand!

CHAPTER VII.

REGRETS — MASKS — THE FREUTCHI — NATIONAL MUSIC — COUNTRY BALLS — ON DITS — LIFE AT LUCERNE — FAREWELL THOUGHTS — DEPARTURE FROM LUCERNE — ZOLFINGEN — ARBOURG — EVIL OF A BAD NAME — APPROACH TO BASLE — BASLE — RETURN TO FRANCE — CONCLUSION.

THERE are many things in and about Lucerne, which, owing to my sad mischance, I must leave behind me unseen. I can reconcile myself to the loss of the Town Hall, though it possesses the portraits of all the magistrates and high dignitaries of Lucerne, from the earliest date (I believe) of its official honours down to the present time. The torn and blood-stained banners which floated over the fields of Sempach, the armour of Duke Leopold, and the iron helmet of Zwingle, (these last at the Arsenal) are associated with some fine recollections; the stained glass, too, is (I am told) worth a regret, but I have given mine to the mountains which I cannot visit, and to the forests whose skirts are all

that I am permitted to see. I would rather go up amongst the high pastures of the Bündlen-Alpe and whisper to its great poplar, and hear the delicious echo that answers only to the voice of the shepherd,* than visit all the town-halls in the thirteen (now twenty-two) cantons.

I do not sufficiently understand the mechanism of nature (human nature, I mean) to account for a feeling which in the midst of my true love for solitary mountain countries, and the deep and full enjoyment which I find in contemplating the lonely splendour of nature in her unpeopled worlds, now and then comes upon me. When I have lived in the midst of society, I have never desired any other than that of the few who were dear to me, and though a lover of cheerfulness and cheerful people, I never have cared much for what is called the *world*; yet when I drive along the road that leads back to the countries from which we have come, the road that goes to Berne, and then to France, and so on, the utter absence of all movement, the entire breaking off of every link that united us with the—if I may so call it—*old* world, has something melancholy in it, that gets hold of me I know not why. I often find myself looking out

* A popular superstition.

along the road to see if there is a carriage approaching, with a sort of interest for which I cannot account, for I know that if Lucerne was a place of winter gaiety, frequented by strangers, instead of liking, I should detest it. Why then should I, who have, if not all those whom I love, at least most of them, around me; who possess the brightest and happiest of fire-sides, and never approach it without blessing the absence of what is called gaiety, and praising (from my heart) the better gifts of quiet, liberty, and leisure, for which we have exchanged it,—why should I cast a backward glance upon that for which I never had the slightest value? I cannot tell, and it is because I cannot that I make a note of it,—noting also that it is only on that *homeward* road that it attacks me.

On the *Jeudi gras*, and for two or three days before it, though we certainly had no intention of seeing masks, we found ourselves visited by many. There was no attempt at character, nothing beyond the old routine of "I know you; do you know me," and the common resources of a pebble in the mouth, and a black domino. In the "piping time of peace," great licence is said to be allowed, and great advantage taken of it, but of this, not having witnessed it, I can say nothing.

So much however had been told us of the tilts and tournaments, the pomps and gauderies of peaceful days, that we had got back in fancy to the gilt Bucentaur and the wedding of the Doge, and could not help regretting that such fine things should be prohibited. Our consolation was that the Freutchi, the apple of the eye, the rarest of all raree shows, could not be discontinued without depriving the town of the advantages derived from certain funds left by the founder on the express condition of its annual observance. And we were led to think that we should see something emulative of the merry antics, the caparisoned follies, of old Italy.

The story had a colouring of promise. Frère Freutchi had borne arms in the Venetian wars, had been a soldier of the Sforza, and returning home from Italy with his head full of the masques and pageantries of that imaginative land, had founded the procession in which himself and his wife were originally the principal performers. He was a wit, too, this Freutchi,—one whose heart was as light as the thistle's down, and whose convivial haunt is still honoured at Lucerne as we honour the Boar's Head in Eastcheap. Nature had given him one of those masks, which she sometimes delights in bestowing on her festive favourites; and great skill (it was said) had been employed in

imitating the rich spread of his traditional features in the enormous pasteboard which was to cover those of his modern personator.

We had ordered our traineau, and meditated a drive towards the convent of Rathhausen, but who could think of quitting their ground when there was question of the Freutchi? Then there arose a doubt as to its coming,—political impediments of course;—we sent out to make inquiries; fresh assurances of its speedy approach, and a confirmatory sketch of the line of march. Meanwhile crowds gathered, something like a drum was heard in the distance, casements opened, heads were thrust out; only a false alarm, no Freutchi yet, but we were consoled by hearing that it was already in movement, though it had not turned into our direction.

Suddenly a procession of a different kind made its appearance; it was the Host borne to a neighbouring house, in which a young woman lay dying. The men uncovered, the women made the sign of the cross, all bent their bodies as it passed, and then turned round to look out for the Freutchi. At length shouts were heard, and joyous sounds, and cries of "the procession is moving,"—"the Freutchi is coming;"—"my window is best; no, mine is better," resounded from all sides; all rushed forward—and lo! a common cart stuck

round with green boughs, in which were three or four senseless masks, and a deplorable *Pierot* throwing handfulls of bran at the rabble of boys who surrounded it, opened and closed the procession.

Amongst the ambulating masks who were pleased to bestow themselves upon us, I must not omit the most interesting,—four German students from some distant town equipped as peasants of the Tyrol, with the carnival accompaniments of saucer eyes, and pasteboard noses, and the Spanish ones of castanets and guitar. Their song, intermixed with dance, their giddy joy, the taste, spirit, and feeling with which they performed, were highly characteristic. It was the merriest masking of the carnival, and as they capered to their wild music, snapping their fingers, and rattling their castanets in that true spirit of mirthfulness which when German gravity relaxes into fun always seasons its enjoyments, their gaiety became contagious. Their music, too, was delightfully fresh and original, with a beautiful tender vein breaking through and chastening its bright gaiety. I have never seen any thing so dramatic off the stage, nor often on it. It has always appeared to me that national music can alone be done justice to by those whose early recollections are bound up with it, and who feel it

in that spot of the heart's core which never grows old; it is then the song of memory, gay or sad as it may be, but always heartfelt. The popular airs of Germany sung by Germans, have a delicious freshness about them, due perhaps as much to the spirit and feeling of the singers, as to their intrinsic beauty. The heart throws itself into the song, and becomes again an actor in the chase, the gay carousal, the tender inquietudes of love. Both our students and their music were German to the letter; their song sparkled and overflowed like their wine cups, and the tone of sentiment which is always there to refine its coarser particles, was given with delicacy and feeling.

Gayer nations have no idea of the hilarity of a German dancing song, as we saw it performed last night. Such an exuberance of animal spirits, such a throwing off of care, every muscle in movement, all joy and revelry to the very fingers' ends. But the dance over, and eyes and noses laid aside, our students became grave men and bashful ones, with the exception of a single figure whose convivial tone defied seriousness. Another—a little man, with a keen bloodshot eye, and a single feather in his flat beaver, might have sat for the portrait of Oliver Cromwell.

Yesterday, being the last Sunday before Lent,

was honoured as all good things are when we find ourselves about to lose them. All the little inns in the neighbourhood were full to the last drop, no room even for the rose-leaf of the Persian doctor; but the Lion at Ebikon* carried the day. The balls given on such occasions are presumed rustic, mere peasants' festivals; but all Lucerne go to them, and not only do the town gentlemen dance with the country girls, but the town ladies with the men (now chiefly transformed into soldiers) and not the decent and reserved quadrille, but the intimate waltz, the men falling to in their shirt sleeves for the sake of coolness and freedom of action. With the ladies this is of course a mere act of complaisance; but how far a custom which brings the peasant girl into habits of close familiarity with town gentlemen, and gay ones, may affect domestic happiness or weaken moral feeling, must be at least doubtful. The publicity, too, which it gives to the charms of those who happen to possess any, is not likely to be favourable to habits of contented industry and quiet enjoyment. All the handsome young wives as well as maidens in the vicinity are frequenters of these assemblies, and are as well known and as regularly expected

* A village a league from Lucerne.

as the legitimate beauties of a country town at the annual race-ball. I have not been able to learn whether the results are such as might be apprehended; but if no heads are set gadding, no hearts turned away from their duties and affections, and no tastes spoiled for the honest mirth of their own circle, it is certainly much in favour of the right feeling and steady principle of the Lucernoises. There are other balls going on at present, public ones—for private gaieties seem almost unknown,—and amongst them one accessible only to the married. No unmated bird of either sex is admitted, unless an exception be made in favour of strangers, which I believe sometimes happens. I am not sure whether the men dance with their own wives or with those of their neighbours, but I think with their own; and all wear black, somebody told us, but perhaps for a humbug, and to laugh at our surprise.

Morals at Lucerne are very nearly, I believe, what they are in Paris or London, only the sphere of action is more confined. The absence of carriages, and of showy pedestrians, gives the town, at first sight, something of the sober air of a Moravian settlement. You look up to the walls, and the multiplied Madonnas tell you that you are in a Catholic canton. I have heard it said, and by

Lucerne Catholics too, that the neglected state of the cottages, the fences, the gardens, tell it long before the town is entered; I cannot say that I have myself made the remark. The gentlemen residents are sometimes accused of spending too much of their time in public-houses, not always of the most respectable description, and of lounging away life on benches before the coffee-house door, making notes on the passers by; idle as motes and stinging as gadflies. They are accused too of many other things, such as the love of wine, and even beer—inglorious beer! and of play too—the crying sin of this demure-looking town, and all this in low company when better is not to be had, and sometimes when it is. The clever men are said to be too often "mauvais sujets," and "mauvais sujets" of a description by no means poetical, with tastes as inglorious as the beer, &c. If all this be true, the cause probably lies in the habits of idleness contracted by living in a town where there is little commerce, no decided taste for literature or the arts, no important professional situations; consequently little excitement, and a number of small government places after which the many run, and which, when obtained, seem to content the ambition of their indolent possessors, who vegetate on the feeble means of existence which a scanty salary

affords. In some cases, perhaps, because their powers have not been called out by favourable circumstances, and in others, because the rust of habitual idleness has gathered upon the mind until the springs have become obstructed, and the mental mechanism has lost its power of action. A new political vein has been opened, and it is possible that the diffusion of advantages, hitherto confined to a few, may awaken the excitement of hope, without which nothing is ever heartily undertaken.

Life here is not exactly life as it is understood in London or Paris; some things are still "au temps de Louis Quatorze." The dinner hour is twelve o'clock, the supper seven or eight; parties commence at six and end at nine, with the exception of balls, which rarely take place at private houses, and are kept up till a very late hour. For the rest, society seems to be much the same kind of thing that it is in other places; a little stiffness, a little scandal, a little cause for it; civility of deportment and self-importance, pride of birth, and confusion of ranks, a general air of gloom, and an individual pretension to gaiety, good fire-sides, and bad; in short, human nature with its lights and shadows, and the plague-spot idleness in the darkest part of it. I must add that, as far as I can judge from mere

casual observation, with little help of intercourse, the Lucernois appear kindly disposed towards strangers, and of friendly and obliging manners; but it is difficult, if not impossible, for foreigners to form a correct judgment of a people (or their ways) who are new to their observation. The reason, I believe, is in a great measure this,—that we are apt to draw our inferences less from generalities than exceptions, which being more strikingly presented to the mind, impress it more, and are seized upon more easily.

When I first saw Lucerne, I was struck with its dismal aspect, it seemed to be at the back of the world; but habit has reconciled me to its gloom, and made me love its silence and its leisure. I shall never forget the melancholy beauty of its winter scenery. In summer countries where flowers, and foliage, and verdure, make paradise, winter is a long eclipse; here it is but another shape of majesty. The grand forms of nature resist the varieties of season, and if but a gleam of sunshine illumine the snows of this amazing country, it seems so glorious that memory hardly brings back the splendour of summer in greater brightness.

I am sure that I shall often think of all this in other lands, and probably with more regret than I

now feel at leaving it behind me;—and yet I have regrets, too. After so long a stay, it is not alone quitting a fine scene, it is saying farewell to a familiar one. It will probably be long before I can look again from the window of my bedchamber on such a hill as swells up before it, and which, like a legitimate beauty whose decline bears witness, has still enough left of loveliness to keep alive even in the midst of its snows the recollection of past splendour. How often, when the dread of approaching winter or impending feuds was upon us, have I said, "Good Asmodeus, if thou would'st but give us the tail of thy white satin mantle to cling to!" But the winter has passed away most happily; when the sun shone it brought cheerfulness, and when it ceased to visit us we put rose-trees between the double windows, and cheated ourselves into a summer feeling. We have no balls, no plays, no society,—none whatever; but we have books, music, bright wood-fires, good studies of nature for those who can draw, traineaus for those who cannot walk, and for those who can, —but when I look at nature, I am sick of words. In short, we have no time for ennui, but enough for the exercise of our best affections and kindest solicitudes. There is even something poetical in our way of life, encaverned in the heart of moun-

tains, on the shores of a lonely lake, girdled round with beetling forests and imperishable snow which never allows us to forget that we are in a land distant and different from our own; feeding on chamois, chevreuil,* and other wild meats, and hearing, as we sit round our evening fire, the full tide of German patriotism bursting out in hymns to the "good sword," or the "fleet horse," or the "dear country," and mounting up to us from the public hall, which is not unfrequently the scene of the students' social, but decent enjoyments.

But it is all over now: we have bid adieu to the excellent people of the Cheval Blanc, who have done every thing that innkeepers could do to make us comfortable, and who now stand at their door, some in tears and all with long faces, to see the last of us and follow us with good wishes. How beautiful does the lake appear, and the river, and the blue sky! How fine and dreary the great Pilate, with its deeply indented ridge carved out on the heavens! How lovely all things seem when we are about to leave them—perhaps for ever! and the repose, the inappreciable leisure—I did not think that I should have felt it all so much—so regrettingly.

But so it is, and there is nothing to raise the heart on the uninteresting road to Zolfingen, a dull town abounding in fountains, and with a patchwork of wee gardens round it, each with its summer sentry-box, that is to say, its tea or beer-bower,—such a retreat as used to be called in England a summer-house; but now, since temples and pavilions have elevated matters, the summer-house has become an extinct vulgarism. These road-side gardens consist, in general, merely of four or five flower knots; however they *are* flower knots, and I dare say look fresh and pretty in their summer livery. But in the neighbourhood of Lucerne, the gardens are little square patches fenced round with high laths; I took them for meat-safes at first, but learned that they were gardens, though resembling what we call by that name as the sod in a thrush's cage does a park.

I have long suspected that the finest scenery is not always the most inspiring; there should be enough to awaken the fancy, but not enough to satisfy it. It is possible that the excess of beauty, by filling the imagination, may arrest its flight. A wild wood, a soft distance, a tree, a fountain, touches the spring, and the awakened thought flies forward and creates; but where the imagination reposes satisfied and finds even its fairest visions

anticipated, it expands itself into admiration. Every thing in Switzerland confirms this idea.

The fortress of Arbourg, a few miles from Zolfingen, of which we once before had a more distant view, shoots up strikingly, and the little town dives down to the river with good effect. There are clever things here, and the tame country upon which they break in, shows them off as black does a fair complexion. The Aar, increased by the melting of the snows, rushes on with a look and sound of grandeur that become the rocks, and woods, and peaked hills that rise above it. This may be called the country of the roaring waters, not a step without a torrent, mute rills probably in summer time, but now overflowing the villages —the dripping villages—with a magnificent crop of moss, green as an emerald, on every thatch, and a bundle of the same outside each casement, I suppose to keep out the air, and supply the place of the double windows with which all the houses in Lucerne and the cottages in its neighbourhood are furnished.

"I will neither beat thee, nor kick thee, but I will give thee a bad name," says the benign quaker to his dog, and so he mildly turns it out of doors with the mark upon it. Panegyric is a pebble thrown into a pool, it sinks at once; but a bad

name is a bur that sticks. A man has been known to die of a nickname,—but I speak of a town. To-day we were to pass through Liestall, the head-quarters of the insurgents, the seat of their provisional government, and the spot where (according to report) the pact was signed by which the chiefs promised to the revolted peasants three days' pillage of the city of Basle. A village lay before us, "this of course (said we) is Liestall;" indeed something lawless in the air of the people assured us of it. A crowd of peasants were issuing in disorder from a public-house; "what a wicked looking crew (we observed), so fierce and lawless; Heaven be praised that we are not obliged to pass the night amongst them!" Presently we entered a sober quakerish-looking town, where every one seemed occupied and peaceful; it was a blessing (we thought) to find ourselves safe within its quiet precincts; when to our surprise we learned that *this* was Liestall, and the supposed focus of insurrection through which we had fearfully passed, nothing more than an obscure village, where the peasants had assembled to con over the merits of the new constitution offered this day to their consideration and universally approved of. Yet such was the force of a name, that we read at once all the horrors of Parga and St. Sebastian in their vacant faces.

I cannot understand Basle's being in Switzerland, placed as it is at the other side of the Jura. Crossed the Hauenstein, the last link of the chain; a superb road winds round it, and mountains rise up,—not of gigantic elevation, but finely detached, and letting in the eye through their frequent openings on others more distant. Charming, I dare say, when the woods are out, and now with a fine colouring of loneliness upon it, and some turbulent cascades that always become the solitude which echoes no other sound. Snow again at the top of the mountains, but fruit trees to the summit; and below a long line of pastoral valleys now almost under water, with pleasant hills and summer woods, but wanting the eternal verdure of the pine-tree. Saw some children making snowballs and flinging them against the trees, just as I used to do myself,—I will not say how many years ago. What a false promiser is youth,

"Fair morn too oft, of a foul wintery day!"

these creatures look as if they were made to suck the honey of life, and will probably have nothing but the empty comb.

I would not borrow money to spend it at Basle. The Rhine is broad and stormy, but the banks below the town are bleak and unfurnished. From

the long wooden bridge the view may be reckoned striking. The bold and rapid river makes a marked but gradual sweep between two banks covered with houses, one flat, the other starting up amphitheatrically, with a crowding of irregular roofs and perforated steeples, and a clever bending of all kinds of tints,—a sharp old etching, with the Jura drawn out like a screen behind it. All the movement of Basle is on this bridge, which from its length and back-ground of sky, has a detached look not without merit in its way.

The traces of war are still visible, the immortal paving-stone lies about in heaps, and some wooden barricadoes are yet standing; but they talk lightly here of the siege, which to us at Lucerne seemed like the old one of Troy. I believe that few things should be seen very near, or looked into very closely, if we wish them to maintain a grand or imposing character. If we ascend a mountain which at a distance seems to scale the heavens, how civilly it subsides,—perhaps to make way for others still higher that rise up fiercely behind it, and smooth in their turn into comparative gentleness when approached. If we inquire about the burnished clouds that stream gold over the face of the heavens, they prove, alas! to be only concentrated fog with a borrowed light upon them.

There are many handsome houses here, and as clean as Dutch toys. There are wide streets too, and some church-yard promenades—or equivalent—and a prodigious squandering of green paint, and pink paint, and yellow paint, but all cold and silent. In a trading town, I like to see the bustle of trade; it seems to belong to it as quiet does to a small German capital, or the peculiar rattle of light wheels to the court quarters of London or Paris: but Basle is as dull as a French *cul de sac*, with the lower windows blocked up and the ground floors turned into warehouses. The *millionnaires* work at their counters "from morn till dewy eve," and longer if necessary; and as gold makes labour pleasure, they have their reward.

It is the fashion here to build churches of deep red stone, and then to add a coat of deeper red paint to them. The Cathedral is incarnardine, so are St. George and St. Martin both springing out of its walls, mounted and armed cap-à-piè; our patron, at the old trade of dragon killing; the other active too, I think in some warlike way. Within repose the bones, or at least the dust, of the great Erasmus, and those of the great (no doubt she passed for such) Anna, wife of the Emperor Rodolph of Hapsburg:—in the tomb the great form two classes, the *past* and the *for ever*.

Considering that the broad Rhine is here flying along, and the Jura just at hand, and the Vosges in view, and the Black Forest, the whole is ingeniously dull and raw, very like that ancient town which used to serve formerly as a general vignette to all old-fashioned books, from Telemachus to Betsey Thoughtless. The lower class of females wear a sort of penitentiary nightcap, and a short cotton cloak, a kind of tread-mill toilette made worse by uncleanliness. I should have taken them all to be spinners in close factories, who had not time to pick the vagrant wool off their hair or garments.

The Swiss are like the Italians, they love their particular district, and dislike their neighbours. Our waiter abused Basle earnestly; "he was from the Pays de Vaud," he said with a self-sufficient air, "and had nothing to do with it; and added that the gentry of the town were coarse people, who dined off one dish, and had no idea of *entrées*." In Italy no one speaks of Italy, but of their own part of it; the same thing is done in Switzerland, and in the same feeling.

When Switzerland is left behind (which I think it is virtually before Basle is entered) comes a corner of that part of France which was once denominated Alsace, and now the Department of the

Haut Rhin. We passed three days at Langres amongst the cutlers. That excellent old man, Diderot, father to Denis the philosopher, was one of the fraternity some eighty or a hundred years ago. The best thing now at Langres is not its knife trade, but its inn, where we fared sumptuously on mutton of the Ardennes, and fowls that merited the tender and often misapplied name of pullets. A wilful would-do-it visit to that miniature beauty of holiness the Cathedral of Troyes, cost me an enforced repose of three days more amongst its sausages, and famed variety of *charcuterie*. A good inn at Troyes, l'Hôtel du Mulet, and—they say—a sweet summer country; but summer countries depend on leaves, and we were before hand with them, so could not judge of its beauty. At Nogent-sur-Seine we forgot the Paraclete, which is only, or not much more, than half a league off. I am afraid we are poor pilgrims, or such a shrine would not have passed away from our memories.

At Basle they said it was a beautiful country, "just like Switzerland,"—as a bat is like a bird. It is probably agreeable, perhaps pretty in a more becoming season; but the wretched mud hovels in which the poor people live, the sloppy avenues through which they must wade to get into them,

the tottering walls and the bulged roofs would discolour the softest scene. This appearance of wretchedness (heightened by drizzly weather) goes far into France, keeping close company for a long way with the high road to Paris.

It is not, however, from a small and unfavourable portion of a great country that one may be allowed to form a judgment of its general aspect. The road from Basle gives no promise of the splendid scenes which open on the southern coast of France, or run in from its shores decorating the Rhone, the Gard, and the Garonne with their beauty,—a beauty not only acknowledged by the eye but felt by the mind,—a beauty rendered in the highest degree poetical by the brightening power of association. It gives no intimation of those sylvan and romantic valleys which the Pyrenees imbosom; nor does it lead the mind along the castled banks, rich in natural loveliness as in historical recollections, of the winding Loire; nor hang up before us the companion-pictures to those delightful ones which the traveller (accustomed to associate the gorgeousness of a capital with the name of the Seine) finds with surprise adorning its varied course, when it leaves the old city of Rouen, and sweeps onwards through wild and wooded cliffs to the sea.

It would be like judging of England by a small tract of one of its least favoured counties; and only travellers who set out with their prejudices, fondling them like babies and determined never to be surprised, or coaxed, or reasoned into letting them go, could think of deducing conclusions from such premises. Such reasoners, when they condemn the paved roads of France, forget the tremendous weights which, in a country where the interior navigation of canals is hitherto so limited, are destined to pass over them,—forget also, when they abuse the narrow streets of southern cities, the delightful shade which they afford; and while they underrate the French peasant, because he lives on bread and soup instead of beef and potatoes, (attaching some idea of mental degradation to a light diet) never recollect that the Frenchman finds his soup as warm and nourishing, more agreeable to his taste and better suited to his climate than the heavier aliments, and that he may perhaps pity (if too good-natured to despise) the man to whom a bottle of wine is an unknown luxury.

Every country has its advantages, and the system of adoption would be wiser than that of detraction.—France has great ones, her claims are lofty and broadly based, and I would not willingly close my notes with an ungracious paragraph, and that

too in speaking of a country whose delights and advantages I so truly estimate.

We who have lived long under her fine skies, who have enjoyed the plenitude of her natural gifts, and felt our minds expanded by the bright warmth of her social atmosphere, when we return to our own land (always the holy and beautiful one of our hearts and fancies) must ever look back upon her fondly; nor while we doubly and trebly appreciate native blessings, proudly setting them above those of the whole world beside, should we be slow to express that gratitude as well as regret mingles with our recollections.

THE END.

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